THE NO.1 INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

WORLD SOCCER

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Deschamps, Suker, Roberto Carlos... The summer's top transfer targets

DUTCH COURAGE

Rijkaard on the new-look Holland

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PLUS Champions League Final: Full story from Barcelona
Paolo Maldini, Kanu, Jupp Heynckes, Alex Ferguson

Scientists find new product that can increase your stamina, power and strength by up to 25%

Research shows Creatine can help Sportsmen such as Footballers and Rugby players produce more explosive power for longer, as well as increase recovery after intense exercise

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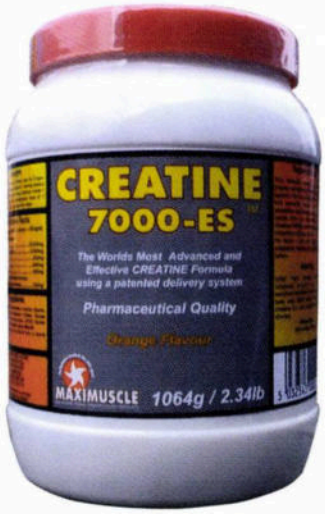

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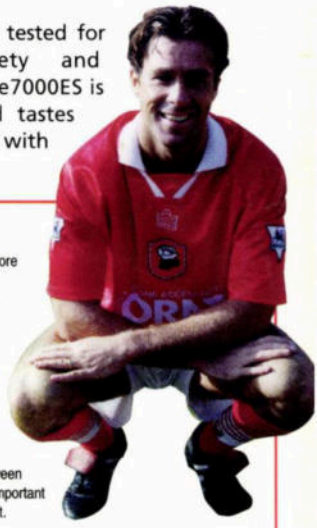

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Ashley Ward - Professional Footballer

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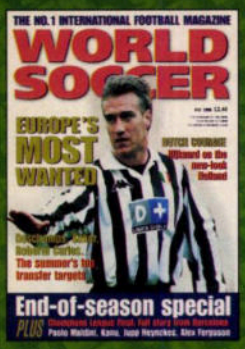

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July 1999

IT'S THAT time of the year when the smallest rumour becomes a multi-million pound transfer overnight. Welcome to soccer's silly season, that 10-week window of opportunity when everybody gets to play fantasy football. The rumours fly, the gossip spreads and enough stories make it into print to prove beyond doubt the maxim that there are lies, damn lies and tabloid transfer stories.

At *World Soccer* we like to deal in something a little more substantial than whispers and hearsay. But not to report on this summer's transfer market would be to ignore the fact that some of the biggest clubs in the world – Real Madrid and Juventus, to name just two – have ripped up last season's script and are starting all over again.

On page 12, we've selected some of the players whose names will be screaming from the back pages over the coming weeks. Some deals will have already been done by the time you read this; some will take a little longer as clubs fight to get their man; others will not even get off the ground.

Just don't take them too seriously... ***Gavin Hamilton, Editor*** *(gavin_hamilton@ipc.co.uk)*

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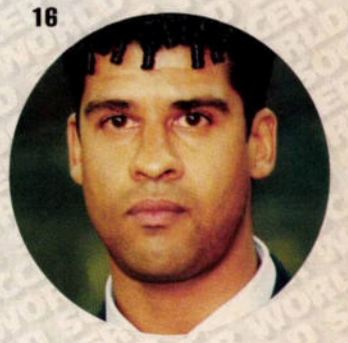

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Keir Radnedge
Executive Editor
COMMENTARY

'If Barcelona do not pay a better going rate to the youngsters then they cannot be surprised when other clubs take advantage'

Poaching the golden eggs

Early success...Nano (second from left) celebrates taking the European Under-16s title

BARCELONA coach Louis Van Gaal wants all the big clubs in Europe to sign an agreement not to poach kids from each other. Van Gaal was galvanised into action by the prospect of losing forward Nano to Arsenal so soon after he had starred for Spain's European Under-16 title winners. But who is to blame?

Nano will believe he had no option. He won't make the grade with Barcelona; there are too many foreigners in the way. Look at the Spanish side who beat Japan in the World Youth Cup Final in April. The majority came from Second Division sides – and went back there on their return from Nigeria.

And it's no use Barcelona pointing proudly at Pep Guardiola. He did, indeed, emerge as a teenager in the early 1990s. But that was in the prehistoric, pre-Bosman days when foreign registrations were restricted and home-grown kids stood a realistic chance of pushing their way to the top if they were good enough.

The problem now is that talented kids don't even get as far as showing whether they've got what it takes or not. Not that Barcelona should scream too long and loud. After all, they pinched Nano – Fernando Macedo da Silva – from Deportivo La Coruna when he was 15, having been spotted by Barcelona scout Amador.

"He's better than most of his age in the air and has two good feet," says Spain's youth coach, Juan Santisteban, who, as a Champions Cup-winning right-back with Real Madrid in the late 1950s, knows all about good footballers.

Arsenal's swoop says everything about how Europe's big clubs are mobilising vast international networks of scouts. Nano was spotted by an Arsenal spy in mid-season, and hardly had his feet touched the ground after the European youth triumph than he, his parents, his agent (already!) and a lawyer were in London.

'Sources close to the player' (as we say) claim that Arsenal offered a four-year contract worth £1.5million. Nano is currently on £250 a month with Barcelona, so how could he say no?

Thus, here again, Barcelona may be seen as contributing to their own loss: if they do not pay a better going rate to the youngsters – indeed, they might even be accused of exploiting the kids' ambition and talent – then they cannot be surprised when other clubs take advantage.

In Spain, 16 is the youngest age at which a professional working contract can be signed. Barcelona signed Nano at 15 and he was thus registered only as an amateur. His amateur 'contract' applies only within Spain so, as a minor, he is dependent, legally, upon his parents. When they – as appears to be happening in this case – decide that they want to move abroad, then nobody can stop him from going with them.

To cancel his amateur contract, all he need do is present formal proof of a change of domicile. Nano's father, Fernando, an insurance clerk in La Coruna, is reported to have been offered employment in London. The best life policy he's ever been involved with!

Good enough for us, not good enough for France

I AM not embarrassed to write that I was one of those members of the Football Writers' Association who voted for David Ginola as Footballer of the Year.

Judging by the string of snide comments that appeared about the Frenchman's accolade you might have been forgiven for wondering how he managed to collect not only the writers' award but the players' union prize. He seemed a pretty obvious candidate to me.

It's easy – comparatively speaking – to pick up individual awards if you are a star in a high profile, top-of-the-table side. But Ginola was a controversial performer at a struggling club who have needed three managers in two years and whose 'commitment' was considered a subject for question when George Graham took over as manager last autumn.

That Spurs ended up winning the League Cup and reaching the FA Cup semi-finals says plenty about Ginola. More, clearly, than his erstwhile critics were prepared to acknowledge. After all, he appears to have proved them wrong – by their colleagues' admission.

Not that this is the end of the matter, because star players and their coaches are not always the best of friends. Graham is renowned as a believer in hard work and 90-minute endeavour ...and a man of similar tastes, Aime Jacquet, felt France had no need of Ginola at World Cup 98.

Winning the game's ultimate prize proved him absolutely right. Not that Ginola would think so.

Popular choice...Ginola takes the PFA award prior to the writers' accolade

Exotic import...Fan Zhiyi of Crystal Palace

Club or country, continued

THE early good news emerging from discussions about a unified international calendar is that this summer's Confederations Cup will be the last.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter, having struggled against his better nature to find a gap for the unfortunate event this year in Mexico, has admitted as much. "In a structured calendar with the World Cup in its traditional place and the regional championships serving as qualifying competitions, I can see no place for the Confederations Cup," he told me.

The Cup was due to take place in Mexico this past January until the Europeans played up. Now it will go ahead at the end of July and start of August. European pre-season plans may be upset somewhat, but that is hardly as bad as interfering with domestic competitions.

Anyway, most European clubs can console themselves with the thought that their players are gaining pre-season practice in a competitive environment.

Rangers and Celtic, however, are not so happy with the summer calendar. Both stand to lose key players to Australia, who want to make the best fist possible of their two high-profile friendlies against Manchester United. This will upset both clubs' entries into the early rounds of the European club competitions. Football, after all, is an all-year game nowadays.

The simple answer for European clubs who do not wish to be compromised by losing key men to international calls from the other side of the world is to sign only European players. Then again, where would European football be without some of its exotic visitors?

China's Fan Zhiyi, for example, has just been voted Asian Footballer of the Year. Not, one assumes, for his achievements with financially-embarrassed Crystal Palace.

Sheepshanks' real challenge

DAVID SHEEPSHANKS of Ipswich is fighting an uphill battle in his bid to take over as FA chairman.

It's not just that Geoff Thompson has the advantage of being in acting command. The disastrous reign of predecessor Keith Wiseman underlined the danger of electing a leader from the top ranks of the League.

That is unfortunate because Sheepshanks is a pragmatic thinker and has organised an effective campaign, including a manifesto setting out precisely what he aims to achieve. Whether that will impress the conservative FA councillors or frighten them is open to question.

Sheepshanks is committed to the 2006 World Cup bid (but what else would he say?) and offered a conciliatory gesture to the rank and file by promising a review of the number of non-EU players in the Premiership.

Even so, this has little long-term significance. The Toth case going before the European Court this summer probably will put EU-domiciled non-EU players on the same employment basis as 'local' colleagues. Also, the countries of eastern Europe are rapidly being brought into the EU and its associated trading areas. Soon, EU regulations will apply to all European footballers.

Sheepshanks may need to consider other battlegrounds, such as stopping the Sports Minister from threatening so many officials' freebies with his proposal for a UK team.

Hail Ramsey the realist

Giving direction...Alf Ramsey

TOO MUCH sentimental nonsense has been written about Sir Alf Ramsey – largely by young sports journalists who were in short trousers or even nappies, if they were that old, when England won the World Cup in 1966.

The tabloids went to town on the scandal of how he was ungratefully hounded out of office, perhaps ironically unaware that much of the pressure of the time was caused by their own back pages. One national newspaper, for years afterwards, used the three words 'Ramsey must go' as a template by which the size of all back-page screamers was measured.

Sir Alf was a realist; that was how he won the World Cup. He accepted – and not until the end of the first round of the finals – the realistic truth that he did not have wingers good enough for his demands. He therefore constructed a more defensive system around workaholic midfielders Alan Ball and Nobby Stiles.

Never mind the unpredictable flair of Jimmy Greaves. Sir Alf wanted solid reliability up front – and how Geoff Hurst repaid him.

Yes, by today's standards, pay of £7,000 a year, which rose to £10,000 after the 1966 World Cup, seem paltry. But, by the standards of the time, it was sensational. English football, remember, had crawled out of its maximum-wage framework only five years earlier.

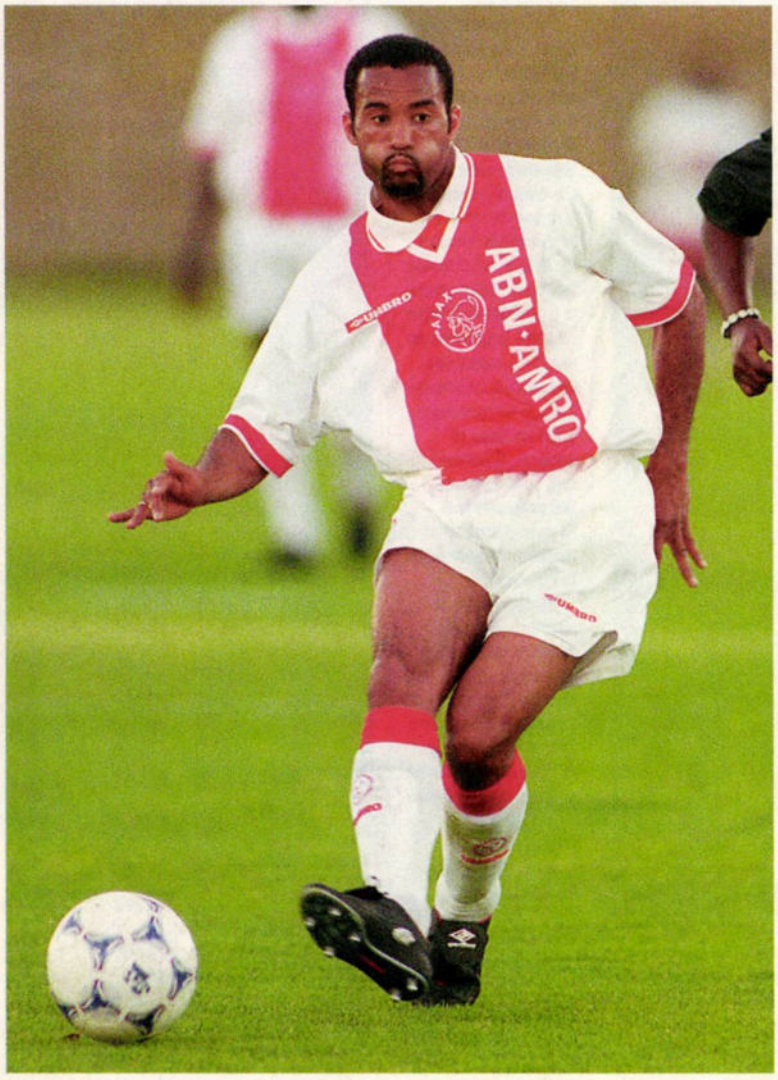
Above all, Sir Alf the realist knew what every manager knows: that poor results mean the sack.

There is no worse result for a manager of England than being eliminated in the World Cup qualifying rounds. The country's failure to make the 1974 finals in Germany meant that his departure was inevitable.

Sir Alf did a remarkable job for England in the 1960s. He was the right man in the right place at the right time. The best memorial would be to hail the reality of what he achieved and not dwell on airy-fairy revisionist naivety.

Mark Gleeson reports from South Africa on yet another money-raising scheme

Ajax, the franchise



Europe 1 Africa 0...Dean Gorre of Ajax Amsterdam scores in the recent friendly against Ajax Cape Town

STEP ASIDE McDonald's and Pizza Hut, here come Ajax! The world of soccer might be seeing an ever-increasing number of co-operation deals between clubs around the globe, but the Amsterdam club have taken it all a step further by franchising their name.

So from Ajax Amsterdam, we now have Ajax Cape Town – a new club to play in South Africa's Premier Soccer League next season, to wear the famed colours of the four-time European Cup winners, and to attempt to play the same style of football.

This is a unique arrangement that is likely to be closely watched by some of the world's other household names. Surely the concept of a Manchester United in the Asian market or a Juventus in South America is not far fetched.

Here is how it is working. Two existing South African clubs, both based in Cape Town, have merged to form Ajax Cape Town. They are Seven Stars, whose chairman Rob Moore has been the main mover behind the deal, and where former Liverpool goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar has been coaching, and Cape Town Spurs, who won the South African League and Cup double in their own right four years ago.

Ajax Amsterdam have bought them both for an undisclosed sum, rumoured to be in the region of £1.4million. The Dutch will control 51 per cent of the new club because, they argue, they want to protect their name and image, but they will leave the running of the club to Moore and Johnny Comitis, chairman of Cape Town Spurs. The pair hold the other 49 per cent stake in the new club.

As far as the South African League is concerned, Seven Stars will now become Ajax Cape Town, simply by applying for a name change in a soccer set-up where the buying and selling of club franchises is common. This practice is also familiar to sports in the United States, where club names often change for commercial and other reasons.

As far as the Cape Town Spurs franchise is concerned, it is to be sold to the highest bidder, which probably will see the club moved to the north of the country, where there is an abundance of spectators but no Premier League franchise. So the size of the South African Premiership stays at 18 clubs.

Ajax Cape Town will take the best players from Stars and Spurs and the surplus staff will be sold or given free transfers.

This means that the two South African owners can make even more money on top of the sale of their shares to Ajax. They get the proceeds from the sale of the other franchise plus the sale of any players who will not be incorporated into the new Ajax Cape Town squad.

The Dutch will provide around £1m for the establishment of a training centre that will rival Amsterdam's fabled De Toekomst set-up – one small hitch is that the original site is being opposed by residents – and also will send a technical director to Cape Town to run the coaching of the club, which will have teams from the under-10 age group upwards.

A new coach also is being sought for the first team. Grobbelaar was offered the job after a remarkably successful six months with Seven Stars but the owners seem to have gone cold on him and are now looking elsewhere.

Ajax Amsterdam, of course, get first pick of any talent that might emerge out of the junior programmes at Ajax Cape Town. And, of course, the kid will not cost a dime.

Seven Stars sold forward Benni McCarthy to Ajax Amsterdam, and it is through that deal that this relationship has now developed.

The South African FA has been lukewarm, to say the least, about the franchise takeover, but has not been able to fashion a logical argument to oppose it.

pioneers

Officials say they cannot allow foreigners to take over South African clubs, but in reality foreigners – even if they are residents of the country – have owned franchises in the South African leagues for decades.

The FA also is scared about young talent leaving the country and being lost to the South African junior national teams.

As far as Ajax Amsterdam are concerned, they estimate that a McCarthy comes around once every five years or so, and that even if only two or three gems are uncovered from the Ajax Cape Town deal over the next decade, it will have been money well spent.

Final confirmation of the whole process is still awaited but it seems that Cape Town is on the verge of football history.

Partners...Ajax Amsterdam line up alongside their Cape Town counterparts after their friendly

COMPETITION RESULTS

ASTON VILLA supporter John Forde was the winner of our Champions League Final competition, run in conjunction with Motorola. His entry was first out of the hat and a couple of weeks later he was off to Barcelona to see Manchester United take on Bayern Munich.

That completed a double for Mr Forde, who had been among the crowd when the Cup-winners Cup Final was played at Villa Park seven days earlier.

Mr Forde is 47, married, and runs a wine store in Banbury, Oxfordshire. He and his brother Michael went to Barcelona as guests of Motorola and *World Soccer*.

These were the questions, and the answers:

1. Name the only club to be beaten in a European Cup Final played on their own ground.

***Answer:* Roma, who were beaten by Liverpool on penalties in 1984.**

2. Who scored in a World Cup Final and a European Cup Final played on the same ground, but was on the losing side both times, by the same score?

***Answer:* Zoltan Czibor. He scored for Hungary against West Germany in 1954 and Barcelona against Benfica in 1961, both in Berne and both lost 3-2.**

3. Real Madrid won the first five European Cup Finals, 1956-60. How many managers/coaches did they have in that time?

***Answer:* Four – Jose Villalonga (February 1955 to July 1957), Luis Carniglia (August 1957 to June 1959), Fleitas Solich (June 1959 to April 1960) and Miguel Munoz (April 1960 to January 1974).**

The following 20 senders of all-correct answers qualified for runners-up prizes, which included Motorola telephones, books and sportswear:

Carmen Rodriguez, Cadiz, Spain; Mark Achterstraat, Badhoevedkoef, Holland; Henri Omer, Jersey City, USA; Allan Cox, Sheffield; Stewart Paton, Alexandria, Scotland; Rosemary Moore, Belfast; Sean Stevenson, Grimsby; Matthew Switalski, Roseville, Michigan, USA; Francis Kendall-Holmes, Barnsley; Chris Jordan, St. Helier, Jersey; Anne Christian Marilleau, Noisy le Grand, France; Graham Andrews, Berrynarbor, Devon; Michael Hansen, Randers, Denmark; Andy Williams, Ashford, Kent; Ari Lappi, Darmstadt, Germany; Silvio Vella, Rabat, Malta; Kennedy Powery, Cayman Islands; Mrs M Hipkiss, Poole, Dorset; Mick Lezczyszak, Mackworth, Derbyshire; J Lee, London.

ESM 11 April 1999

HOW THEY LINE UP

Kahn (5, Bayern); Thuram (5, Parma), Stam (5, Man Utd), Blanc (3, Marseille), Maldini (7, Milan); Beckham (4, Man Utd), Keane (4, Man Utd), Vieira (3, Arsenal), Giggs (3, Man Utd); Yorke (3, Man Utd), Raul (6, Real Madrid).

HOW THEY VOTED

A BOLA (POR)

Kahn (Bayern); Luzhnyi (Kyiv Dynamo), Stam (Man Utd), Johnsen (Man Utd), Maldini (Milan); Beckham (Man Utd), Figo (Barcelona), Effenberg (Bayern), Giggs (Man Utd); Shevchenko (Kyiv Dynamo), Cole (Man Utd).

DON BALON (SPA)

Kahn (Bayern); Salgado (Celta), Marcelino (Mallorca), Matthaus (Bayern), Irwin (Man Utd); Figo (Barcelona), Keane (Man Utd), Guardiola (Barcelona), Raul (Real Madrid); Yorke (Man Utd), Crespo (Parma).

FOOT (BLG)

Kahn (Bayern); Thuram (Parma), Blanc (Marseille), Matthaus (Bayern), Maldini (Milan); Beckham (Man Utd), Kanu (Arsenal), Davids (Juventus), Raul (Real Madrid); Rebrov (Kyiv Dynamo), Yorke (Man Utd).

FRANCE FOOTBALL

Kahn (Bayern); Thuram (Parma), Nowotny (Bayer Leverkusen), Mihajlovic (Lazio), F De Boer (Barcelona); Jeremies (Bayern), Helveg (Milan), Vieira (Arsenal), Giggs (Man Utd); Van Nistelrooy (PSV), Ginola (Tottenham).

GAZZETTA (ITA)

Schmeichel (Man Utd); Bancaro (Lazio), Stam (Man Utd), F De Boer (Barcelona); Maldini (Milan); Keane (Man Utd), Guardiola (Barcelona), Rivaldo (Barcelona), Vieira (Arsenal); Raul (Real Madrid), Anelka (Arsenal).

KICKER (GER)

Kahn (Bayern); Thuram (Parma), Blanc (Marseille), Stam (Man Utd), Maldini (Milan); Chiesa (Parma), Beckham (Man Utd), Jeremies (Bayern), Raul (Real Madrid); Dani (Mallorca), Shevchenko (Kyiv Dynamo).

SPORT (SWI)

Roa (Mallorca); Babbel (Bayern), Stam (Man Utd), Thuram (Parma), Maldini (Milan); Beckham (Man Utd), Veron (Parma), Rivaldo (Barcelona), Leonardo (Milan); Yorke (Man Utd), Jardel (FC Porto).

VOETBAL INT (HOL)

Roa (Mallorca); Luzhnyi (Kyiv Dynamo), Adams (Arsenal), Van Wonderen (Feyenoord), Maldini (Milan); Vieira (Arsenal), Keane (Man Utd), Raul (Real Madrid), Stankovic (Mallorca); Inzaghi (Juventus), Kanu (Arsenal).

WORLD SOCCER

Schmeichel (Man Utd); Thuram (Parma), Blanc (Marseille), Stam (Man Utd), Maldini (Milan); Raul (Real Madrid), Keane (Man Utd), Davids (Juventus), Giggs (Man Utd); Dani (Mallorca), Ginola (Tottenham).

EUROPEAN SPORTS MAGAZINES

Fergie: 'I have to win'

UEFA technical director Andy Roxburgh talked tactics with Manchester United boss Alex Ferguson during a recent visit to Old Trafford

ANDY ROXBURGH: Why do you prefer a back four?
ALEX FERGUSON: The Germans are the only people who have consistently produced successful results using three at the back. Although the 3-5-2 system has some positive aspects, particularly in releasing players from deep positions, it requires tremendous discipline and puts great demands on the wing-backs. It is significant that FIFA and UEFA competition winners – Brazil, France, Juventus, Milan – have played 4-4-2 or 4-3-3. Basically, when you defend areas with good players, 4-4-2 provides a better protection of space. The formation gives you better balance, spreads the workload more evenly, and gives you more attacking options. Three at the back has become a fashion in England; in fact, in our last six games, Chelsea were the only team to play four at the back. In my view, your centre-backs should be capable of doing their job; they must be able to handle one-on-one situations.

I have also favoured the use of wingers. At the present time, we have excellent possibilities. Beckham, with his crosses, can take out the full-back often without going past him. And then there is Giggs, who I encourage to run at opponents with the ball, with the aim of at least eliminating the first defender. In England, the opponent often defends with double cover against our two wingers, and when our midfield players attack the crosses, the opponent doesn't have the numbers in central areas to mount a counter-attack. In Europe, they will mark tight, one on one, and retain bodies in the midfield for the counter-attack.

Facing the media...United manager Ferguson

What are the main demands on you as coach of United?
The main demand is to win. And, at United, there is also pressure on us to entertain. There can be no distinction between winning and not winning. You can play badly and win, and everything is forgotten. However, the tradition of Manchester United requires the entertainment thing, and I'm totally absorbed in it, and even enjoy it. At United, there is now a staff of 380 people, so it is impossible for me to get involved in all aspects of the club – the football and the media dominate my time.

What are the key qualities required to be a successful manager/coach today?
When I started coaching, my main job as a coach was to improve my players, shape my team, balance my team and get them to play football which I enjoyed. Nowadays, you have to coach their minds, you have to develop winning attitudes, teach them about preparation, get them to understand the need for sacrifice. Furthermore, the players in the dressing-room must recognise each other's qualities and appreciate the talents of those around them. I must also create the kind of environment in the dressing-room that can get us through tough times. I always tell the players that we need at least eight of them to play well on a particular day if we're going to have any chance of winning. A winning mentality is vital. I work a lot on their imagination and their ability to finish.

So, what really makes the difference today is preparation, self-sacrifice, the attitudes within the dressing-room, and the team spirit. You need to develop players who are reliable and who can take responsibility. Losing the League last year had a beneficial effect on our young players. Many of them had never lost before, and they gained a new resilience by overcoming the setback – a short-term loss can become a long-term gain. You must develop a mental attitude in the players which makes them produce on a daily basis. I never dodge the issue of communicating my displeasure if players don't perform to our standards.

The key role of any coach is to make a decision – a decision about selection, a decision about recruitment. Many people know the answers, but not everyone is prepared to make the tough decisions. Management is about decision-making. Take Dwight Yorke, for instance. I was convinced he was a good buy, so I made my decision, and I think it has turned out to be one of our best moves.

What is your view of the new Champions League proposals?
It's almost impossible for an English team to win the Champions League as it is, never mind an increased version. The demands on us are too great. With domestic and international commitments, there's too much football. There's a need to reduce something. In England, we need a mid-season break, and we need to remove international friendlies from the programme.

In an era when buying success is the preferred option, you still work hard at rearing your own players. Why?
Manchester United have bought some great players; just think of Denis Law, Bryan Robson, Eric Cantona. But then think of the home-grown players like Bobby Charlton, George Best, Duncan Edwards, and the new breed of Beckham, Giggs, Scholes, etc. I believe that we must produce our own players, because they produce the heart and spirit of United – these home-grown talents give us our identity.

Is there a future for international football?
Your football is ultimately judged at two events – the World Cup and the Champions League. So international football is an important focal point and, therefore, must be maintained.

Have your foreign players had a significant influence on the way your team plays and trains?
Yes. Eric Cantona was a marvel at training. He brought a practice ethic to the club. After our normal training sessions, he, on a voluntary basis, would practise his techniques. The young players followed his example, and the benefits were immense. Even when Eric had a problem, I was very protective of him, because your players must have faith and trust in you. That's why I don't criticise my players in public – anything I have to say, I say it in private. Trust between a player and a coach is sacrosanct.

How do you handle the new breed of superstar players?
Superstars usually have big egos and these need to be fed – that means they need to win. Money can change anyone, but our best players have remained unchanged in their mentality, despite their riches. It's the person inside that matters. It's about drive and ambition, and many people retain these urges even if they become wealthy. I have a natural drive and energy which makes me strive for new achievements, for new challenges.

Are there aspects of today's game which disturb you?
I don't like players who cheat by diving, because they are trying to get their opponents sent off or trying to trick the referee into giving a penalty or a free-kick. It's a despicable thing, and I won't allow my players to do it. This habit of waving an imaginary card at the referee in order to get the opponent sent off is also offensive. The cheat should be red-carded.

You have been a very successful manager for nearly two decades now. Has the job changed you as a person, and has your philosophy of the game altered over the years?
My vision of the game has not changed over the years. I have always wanted my teams to reflect me – that's what I want out of the game. My teams are aggressive and positive, and they want to win, just like me. I will have been a manager for 25 years this summer, and my teams have always competed and tried to play in the right way. Retirement? What would I do if I retired? It's a problem, but I'll probably have to retire in my sixties...*probably.*

This interview originally appeared in The Technician, *the quarterly bulletin of the UEFA technical department*

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Brazilian bonanza

Oliver Butler on the multi-million future for Pele's Beautiful Game

DEVELOPMENTS within the Brazilian football industry are beginning to resemble those in Europe, and similar issues are being raised.

Last year's passing of the Pele Law has stimulated great change within football in Brazil. The legislation was forced through by Pele, now the country's Sports Minister. He promised to introduce a formal commercial structure in a country previously known for its chaotic domestic football.

Now, clubs, forced by the law to become limited companies within two years, have been seeking investment to increase their revenue beyond the sale of players. And despite the fact that the majority of the most popular clubs owe large amounts, investors have not been hard to find.

Football in Brazil generates roughly £600million a year and many believe that with the Pele Law being seen to work, the scope for growth is great.

Frank Craighill, president of Octagon, a company which has joined the many Brazilian banks investing in the clubs, says: "We have followed Brazil for years, but the lack of organisation and the economic instability has kept us away. Now, with greater stability, the Pele Law and private investors moving into the sports segment, our confidence is coming back."

Other multinationals such as management consultants IMG, multi-club shareholder ENIC, and FIFA's marketing arm ISL have joined in. This has sparked questions over the multi-ownership of clubs similar to those raised in Europe, where UEFA and ENIC are currently fighting it out in the courts.

There also is a fear that this rush of investment will broaden the disparity between large and not-so-large clubs. Indeed, the foreign companies have been concentrating their investment on the *Clube dos 13* – the 13 top clubs – who claim 70 per cent of the country's 120 million fans.

Many of the smaller regional clubs, however, have been targeted by domestic companies and financial institutions – for similar reasons if not at the same financial levels.

"We believe the football business could be 30 times bigger by the year 2013, because fans are very loyal consumers," says Luis Demarco of Opportunity Bank, which has invested £8m in the Deportivo Bahia club.

Another parallel with Europe is the emergence of Media Partners International. Having been rebuffed last year by UEFA and the top European clubs over its European Super League, Milan-based MPI has turned to Brazil, signing a deal with Pele's marketing company to develop a business plan for a new superleague there.

For some international companies the Pele Law represents only one stage of their investment in football. The next stage is an amendment to the Brazilian constitution that would allow foreign companies to buy into Brazilian TV. If

Legal framework...Sports Minister Pele

this is passed this year, as expected, companies investing in clubs also will be looking to gain control of the broadcasting rights of their club's matches, in much the same way as Canal Plus owns Paris Saint-Germain, as Mediaset owns Milan and as BSkyB tried to do with Manchester United.

Already Hicks Muse, the American investment firm which has bought Corinthians and had expressed an interest in Flamengo before they were bought by FIFA's marketing company ISL, has taken advantage of laws allowing foreign ownership of pay-TV channels and has a joint venture in a cable TV station.

As the prospect of a superleague raising the profile of Brazilian football increases the value of the rights to broadcast it domestically and internationally, so moves have been made to secure a toehold in the purchase of rights. Already new London-based company Media Content has signed a deal, for an undisclosed sum, which involves the overseas rights to Brazilian football. The company believes that when the league structure becomes simplified, Brazilian football will have even greater worldwide appeal and the rights could be resold to many TV markets, including the UK.

Throughout all this the Brazilian federation (CBF) has been forced to take a back seat in much the same way as the FA did in England during the formation of the Premier League.

Whether the Brazilian clubs will be able to arrange a deal along similar lines is not yet certain, but in becoming limited companies it will be harder for them to justify actions that would undermine such a lucrative development.

Oliver Butler works for Soccer Investor *(www.socceranalyst.com)*

Libero ROUND-UP

Retiring...Jonas Thern

OUT OF ACTION

Chilavert banned for 13 months

GOALKEEPER **Jose Luis Chilavert**, has been banned from football in Argentina for 13 months – for an offence committed five years ago.

Chilavert, of Velez Sarsfield and Paraguay, also was given a three-month suspended jail sentence.

He had been found guilty of attacking an opponent after a match in 1994, and of attacking a stadium employee.

● **Borussia Dortmund** sweeper **Matthias Sammer**, who was out of the game with knee trouble for 18 months, has resumed training.

● **Rangers'** Swedish midfielder **Jonas Thern** has retired because of knee trouble.

COACHES ON THE MOVE

Aussie Hodgson?

ROY HODGSON is to manage a team in a match marking the opening of the Sydney Olympic stadium – against his possible future employers, Australia.

Former Swiss national coach Hodgson is keen to live in Australia and has had talks with the game's ruling body.

● French side **Bastia** have replaced **Laurent Fournier** with his two former assistants, **Jean-Marie De Zerbi** and **Jose Pasqualetti**.

● **Jorg Berger** has returned to **Eintracht Frankfurt**.

● **Stuttgart** have appointed **Ralf Rangnick**.

● **Felix Magath** has quit **Werder Bremen** following the 2-1 home League defeat by Eintracht Frankfurt.

● **Carlos Aimar** has resigned from his post at **Tenerife**. Elsewhere in Spain, Second Division side **Albacete** have sacked Italian coach **Gigi Maifredi**.

● **Alexander Averyanov** has resigned from Russian top flight side **Shinnik Yaroslavl**.

● German **Uwe Wegmann** will coach Liechtenstein team **Vaduz** from July.

● Former Czech national boss **Dusan Uhrin** has quit **Maccabi Haifa**.

● **Xu Genbao**, coach of China's defending champions **Dalian Wanda**, has quit.

● Dutchman **Johan Boskamp** is **Georgia**'s new head coach. *See page 44.*

● **Alain Ngouinda** was dismissed as national coach of **Congo** following the 2-0 defeat by Ivory Coast.

● **Los Angeles Galaxy** have replaced coach **Octavio Zambrano** with **Sigi Schmid**.

● Ex-US national coach **Bob Gansler** is the new coach of **Kansas City Wizards**.

● **Jamaica**'s national team No 2 **Carl Brown** has quit.

● **Gordon Milne** has been fired byTurkish club **Trabzonspor**. *See page 42.*

COACHES STAYING ON

● **Man United** manager **Alex Ferguson** has agreed a new three-year contract.

● **Monaco** have extended **Claude Puel**'s contract for three years.

● **Sven Goran Eriksson** has agreed to stay on at **Lazio** until the end of June 2002.

● **Claudio Prandelli** will stay with Serie A newcomers **Verona** until 2003.

PLAYERS ON THE MOVE

Kubilay down

Veteran Swiss striker **Kubilay Turkyilmaz** has dropped down a league, moving from **Grasshopper** to Second Division **Locarno**.

● **Ajax** have released defender **Mario Melchiot**.

● Danish club **Lyngby** have agreed the end-of-season sale of midfielder **Carsten Fredgaard** to **Sunderland**.

● **Dundee**'s Poland defender **Dariusz Adamczuk** has confirmed a move to **Celtic**.

● **Kaiserslautern** have agreed to sign Yugoslav midfielder **Slobodan Komljenovic** from **Duisburg** and Luxembourg defender **Jeff Strasser** from **Metz**.

● **FC Copenhagen** midfielder **Peter Nielsen** has been signed by **Borussia Monchengladbach**.

● **Thomas Hassler** has quit **Borussia Dortmund** to join **1860 Munich**.

● **Duisburg** are set to sign Czech defender **Pavel Drsek** from **Chmel Blsany** on a three-year contract.

● Derby have transfer-listed **Paulo Wanchope, Igor Stimac** and **Dean Sturridge.**

● **Laurent Robert** has left **Montpellier** for **PSG**.

● **Toni Polster** is set to leave relegated **Borussia Monchengladbach**, who have also lost teenage midfielder **Sebastian Deisler** to **Hertha Berlin**.

● **Real Madrid** have signed Cameroon international **Geremi Ndjitap** from Turkey's **Genclerbirligi**.

● Oviedo goalkeeper **Juan Luis Mora** has signed a pre-contract with **Espanyol**, who need to replace **Atletico Madrid**-bound **Toni.**

● **Atletico Madrid** say they will recall Yugoslav midfielder **Veljko Paunovic** after his one-season loan at **Mallorca**.

● Brazilian World Cup midfielder **Giovanni** is almost certain to leave **Barcelona**.

● **Internazionale** scouts have been in Argentina to watch **Boca Juniors** trio **Martin Palermo**, **Juan Riquelme** and **Walter Samuel**.

● **Anderlecht** have agreed a pre-contract with **Lokeren**'s Czech striker **Jan Koller**.

● **Strasbourg**'s Nigerian

Moving...Toni Polster

defender **Godwin Okpara** is joining **Paris Saint-Germain**.

● Colombian international **Carlos Valderrama** has transferred back to **Tampa Bay** from **Miami Fusion**.

● Denmark's **Jan Heintze** is leaving **Bayer Leverkusen** for **PSV Eindhoven**.

PLAYERS STAYING ON

Irish striker **Tony Cascarino**, now 36, is staying with French club **Nancy** for another year.

● Veteran sweeper **Olaf Thon** has extended his contract with **Schalke** until 2001.

● Brazilian midfielder **Dede** has extended his contract with **Dortmund** until 2003.

● Bundesliga top scorer **Michael Preetz** has agreed to a three-year contract extension with **Hertha Berlin**.

● Juventus midfielder **Antonio Conte** has extended his contract until 2002.

● **Deportivo La Coruna** midfielder **Donato** has signed a one-year contract extension.

INTERNATIONAL INS AND OUTS

Moller dropped

Germany coach Erich Ribbeck dropped Dortmund midfielder **Andreas Moller** and called up 1860 Munich's **Horst Heldt** for the first time for the friendly against Scotland.

● **Scotland** coach Craig Brown surprisingly included **Brian O'Neil** of Wolfsburg for the friendly against Germany.

● **Michael Schjonberg** was recalled for **Denmark**'s friendly against South Africa.

● **South Africa** coach Trott Moloto recalled veterans **David Nyathi**, midfielder **Doctor Khumalo** and **John Moshoeu** to face Denmark.

● **Malawi** included 15-year-old defender **Chisomo Mopiha** for the Cosafa Castle Cup match against Angola.

● Uncapped midfielder **Klaus Rohseano** was the only surprise selection by **Austria**'s new coach Otto Baric for the Euro qualifier against San Marino.

● Frank Rijkaard called up PSV Eindhoven defender **Andre Ooijer** for **Holland**'s friendly against Morocco.

● **Christian Vieri** was recalled by **Italy** for the friendly against Croatia.

● **Japan** coach Philippe Troussier will not seek the release of **Hidetoshi Nakata** for the Copa America.

OBITUARIES

● **Sir Alf Ramsey**, England's 1966 World Cup-winning manager, aged 79. *See Glanville appreciation, page 73.*

● **Phillip Omondi,** one of Uganda's greatest footballers, aged 44.

FOOTBALL BUSINESS

● **Egypt**, **Ghana** and **Nigeria** have withdrawn their bids to host the 2006 World Cup, leaving two African candidates – South Africa and Morocco.

● A survey in *France Football* named **Ronaldo** as the world's highest-paid footballer (£5.5m a year) followed by **David Beckham** (£2.9m) and **Zinedine Zidane** (£2.8m).

● The German federation has refused to grant Second Division **St Pauli** a licence to play for next season because the club offered "insufficient financial guarantees".

Staying at Juve...Antonio Conte

● Decisions reached at the April meeting of **UEFA**'s executive in Tel Aviv included: next season's Champions League matches will be split between free and pay-TV channels on Tuesday and Wednesday nights; UEFA Cup matches will be played on a Thursday; a player will be suspended after collecting three yellow cards; the winners of the Champions League Final will compete in FIFA's inaugural World Club Championship in January 2000.

● **Arsenal** have signed a record £12m, three-year sponsorship deal with Sega.

● The German federation has forbidden TV rights and promotions company UFA from investing in more than one club following concerns about its involvement with both Hertha Berlin and Hamburg.

● **Bordeaux** have accepted a takeover offer from the French M6 television channel.

● Brazilian champions **Corinthians** have agreed to sell all merchandising and licensing rights and sponsorship income to the Dallas-based investment group Hicks, Muse, Tate and Furst.

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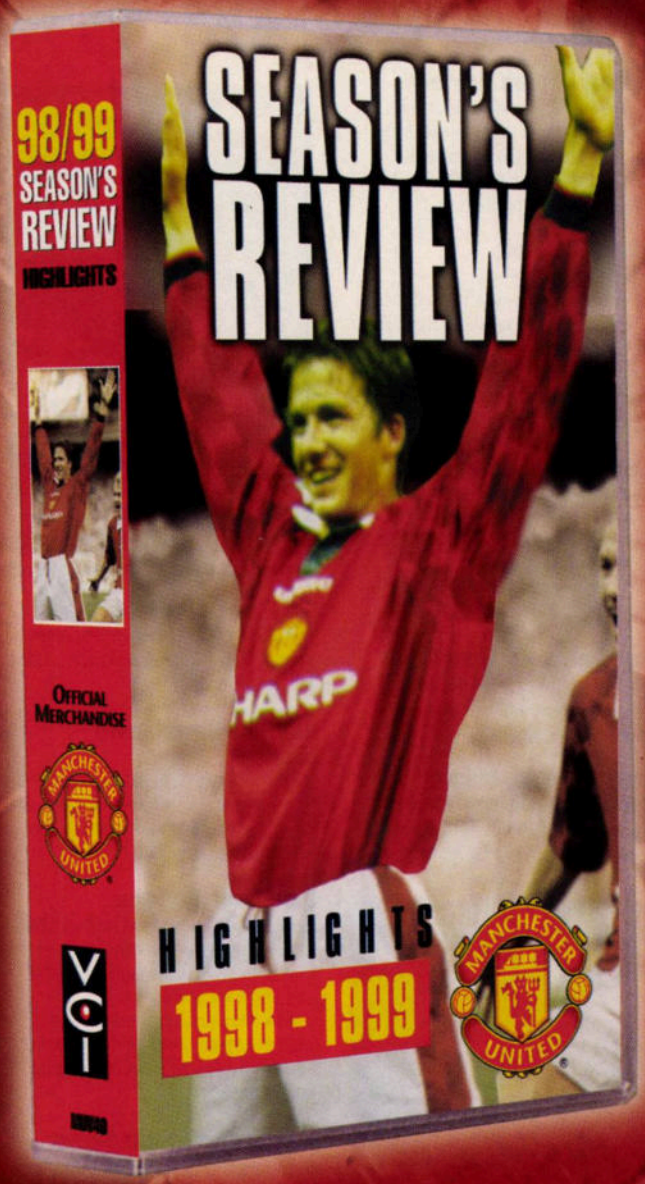

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Europe's most

Nick Bidwell's four-page round-up of the movers and shakers in the transfer market

Up for grabs

The summer's hottest properties

Stephan Appiah Udinese
The 18-year-old Ghanaian defensive midfielder has been in impressive form and is reported to be on the wanted list of a clutch of leading Serie A clubs – Milan are in pole position.

Michael Ballack Kaiserslautern
Adaptable midfielder who has broken into the Germany squad in his first full season. Angered his club by announcing that he wanted to leave for Bayer Leverkusen. Kaiserslautern claim an illegal approach has been made.

Ali Benarbia Bordeaux
Signed from Monaco only 12 months ago. Imaginative midfielder who has proved one of the key men in Bordeaux's title challenge. However, he looks set to pack his bags for Paris Saint-Germain or a Spanish side.

John Carew Valerenga
Valerenga say they are 90 per cent sure of keeping Carew, who has interested Bologna. See profile, page 43.

Albert Celades, Oscar, Roger, Xavi all Barcelona
Looks like the quartet of talented young midfielders from the Barça academy are being squeezed out by the Dutch infiltration of Camp Nou. Many other Spanish club coaches would love to be able to call on them.

Graduating with honours...Roger

Arrivederci Roma?...Marco Delvecchio

Philippe Christanval Monaco
Plenty of Italian clubs like the look of the French Under-21 skipper and libero, with Roma, Fiorentina and Bologna at the head of the queue.

Dani Real Mallorca
Proof that being released by Real Madrid does not necessarily mean a slow death. Thanks to his goalscoring form in the Liga and the Cup-winners Cup this season he now finds himself in the Spanish national team and wanted by Arsenal, Roma and, surprise, surprise, Real Madrid.

Marco Delvecchio Roma
Goals galore this season and a place in the Italy squad. But Roman fans have never really taken to him and he could well say *si* to one of the clubs showing interest, namely Fiorentina and Chelsea.

Joseba Etxeberria Athletic Bilbao
Basque talent often makes its way to Real Madrid or Barcelona. A handsome offer to the Athletic board could result in the battling Spanish international winger leaving town.

Nuno Gomes Benfica
Benfica's finances are not written in black, and supporters of the Lisbon Eagles would, of course, hate the idea of seeing their leading goal threat jump ship for a Spanish vessel. But money talks.

Simone Inzaghi Piacenza
The younger brother of Juventus striker Filippo. He has the same flair for scoring goals and seems certain to leave the provinces for a big city. The most insistent reports suggest Milan.

Nikos Machlas Vitesse Arnhem
Last season's Golden Shoe winner has been among the goals again this term. The Greek marksman's every move is being monitored by Bayern Munich, but clubs from the Premiership and Italy are equally keen.

Marcelino Real Mallorca
No-nonsense stopper who has made the Mallorcan defence such a tough nut to crack. The recently-capped Spanish international is being courted especially assiduously by Newcastle and Real Madrid.

Gaizka Mendieta Valencia
The Valencia skipper is one of the most improved players in La Liga, a right-sided midfielder who can do everything: win the ball, pass it, get into scoring positions, and score. Not unsurprisingly, Real Madrid are keeping a sharp eye on him, as are a number of leading lights in Serie A.

Shabani Nonda Rennes
Goals from the Burundi striker have been instrumental in keeping Rennes in the upper part of the French League. Yet economic realities point to the relatively small Breton club cashing in on their African jewel. His destination? Paris Saint-Germain, Monaco or Marseille, with Lazio a good outside bet.

Martin Palermo Boca Juniors
Flamboyant Argentinian front-man whose goalscoring has captured the imagination of many Italian clubs. Madrid is a possibe destination, but the smart lire is on a move to Parma.

Simao Sabrosa Sporting Lisbon
This 19-year-old striker has made such an impact this season that Barcelona are reported to have agreed to pay £10million for the kid being labelled, predictably, the new Luis Figo.

Action man...Gaizka Mendieta

Serginho Sao Paulo
Left-sided Brazilian wing-back known for his dribbling and crossing ability. Reports have suggested he will be Roberto Carlos's successor at Real Madrid or that he will link up with Milan.

Ruud Van Nistelrooy PSV Eindhoven
A potent mix of power and finesse who has hit goal upon goal in his first season at PSV and forced his way into the Dutch national team. But could it be his last in Eindhoven? Barça coach Louis Van Gaal is just one of many admirers beyond Holland's borders.

wanted

Striking asset...Nuno Gomes may swap his Benfica shirt for a Spanish club's colours

Europe's most Wanted

Back to France?...Didier Deschamps could be bound for Monaco or Marseille

Big name, big speculation

The stars who have kept the rumour-mill turning

Nicolas Anelka Arsenal
The precocious striker might have come to the end of the road at Highbury. Marseille, Juventus and Real Madrid would break the bank to get him.

Fabien Barthez Monaco
France's World Cup-winning keeper has been linked to several top continental clubs, chief among them Internazionale, Parma and Real Madrid.

Mario Basler Bayern Munich
His eccentric behaviour has undermined his relationship with the Bayern management. Despite his controversial image, a recent poll indicated that more than two-thirds of Bundesliga clubs would take him on. Italy is another option.

Gianluigi Buffon Parma
Parma say the young Italian international keeper is not for sale. Rumours nonetheless persist that he could be bound for the Premiership or Inter.

Alessandro Del Piero Juventus
Still recuperating from a serious knee injury, but rumours that there is a pack of illustrious suitors are rife all the same. The usual suspects are reported to be on the trail of the brilliant attacker: Manchester United, Internazionale, Lazio, Milan, Real Madrid, Chelsea...

Didier Deschamps Juventus
France's skipper is clearly heading for the Juve exit. Destination Monaco, Marseille or Athletic Bilbao – he was born in the French Basque town of Bayonne.

Youri Djorkaeff Internazionale
Certain to quit Inter after failing to hold a place this season. Marseille, Monaco, and PSG are potential buyers. So are Atletico Madrid and Valencia.

Jardel FC Porto
After dominating the Portuguese goalscoring scene for the past three years, a new challenge looks imminent for the Brazilian. Serie A or the Spanish Liga awaits him.

Claudio Lopez Valencia
Take your pick. More or less every leading Italian and Spanish club wants the Argentine winger. Juventus, Fiorentina, Lazio, Parma, Inter, Barcelona and Real Madrid are only a few of the interested parties.

Fabrizio Ravanelli Marseille
Seems sure to leave Marseille after an unhappy spell in France. The Italian forward could return to his homeland, with Fiorentina the name in the frame.

Serhii Rebrov Kyiv Dynamo
Kyiv will not be able to keep the western wolves from their door much longer. Italy or Spain is likely to be the next port of call for this Ukrainian forward of rare craft and intelligence. See East Europe, page 44.

Leaving Porto?...Jardel

Much admired...Clarence Seedorf

Roberto Carlos Real Madrid
Should have no difficulty finding another high-profile club if Real boss John Toshack releases him. Barça's vice-president has declared he wants the Brazilian left-back; Juventus are interested too.

Clarence Seedorf Real Madrid
Newcastle United, Internazionale, Juventus, Milan and Lazio are said to be scrambling over themselves for the services of the Dutch playmaker.

Davor Suker Real Madrid
Following two years on the bench at Real, the Croatian international forward could be attracted by a move to the Premiership, the Bundesliga or the French League. But not English First Division side Fulham. See Spain, page 34.

Lilian Thuram Parma
Inter are reported to have offered £14.3million for the best defender in the world; Real Madrid would probably do likewise. But are Parma prepared to sell the Frenchman?

Edwin Van der Sar Ajax
The Dutch keeper intimated that Man Utd were on his case; it was denied at Old Trafford. Roma are also said to be keen.

Juan Sebastian Veron Parma
Who would not want the outstanding Argentinian playmaker? Lazio's enthusiasm to bring him to the capital has been a constant theme in the Italian press.

Signed and sealed

The deals that are done and dusted

Fredi Bobic
VfB Stuttgart to Borussia Dortmund
A move was always likely from early in the season when he clashed with Stuttgart president Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder. Bobic has 19 caps for Germany, but his international career has stalled in the past couple of years. Even so, he cost £4million.

Aboubacar 'Titi' Camara
Marseille to Liverpool
Powerful striker from Guinea, mainly used as a sub at Marseille this season. Previously with Saint-Etienne and Lens.

Marco Di Vaio
Salernitana to Parma
One of Italy's best young goalscorers. Parma paid nearly £6.5million for him, beating Milan and Atletico Madrid to his signature.

Cyril Domoraud
Marseille to Internazionale
Athletic stopper in outstanding form for the Provencal club this season. Inter are looking to him to shore up their shaky back-line.

Ivan Helguera
Espanyol to Real Madrid
Midfield organiser with great distribution and vision. Had an abortive spell with Roma a year ago. See profile, page 35.

Jari Litmanen
Ajax to Barcelona
A reunion with former coach Louis Van Gaal for the Finnish international.

Steve McManaman
Liverpool to Real Madrid
Liverpool won't get a penny for the England midfielder, who joins Real on a lucrative free transfer.

Michel Salgado
Celta Vigo to Real Madrid
Speedy right wing-back whose top-notch performances in recent months for Celta and Spain have made him a searing hot property.

Michael Mols
Utrecht to Rangers
The prolific Dutch striker looked to be heading for Ajax, only for Rangers boss and compatriot Dick Advocaat to find the right words to persuade him to go to Ibrox.

Vincenzo Montella
Sampdoria to Roma
Roma president Franco Sensi has been chasing the little Samp goal poacher for years. Sampdoria's relegation finally allowed a deal to be struck.

Souleymane Oulare
Genk to Metz
Guinean international who scored 17 goals to help Genk to their first Belgian championship, then turned his back on the Champions League in favour of a move to France.

Christian Panucci
Real Madrid to Internazionale
A Champions League winner with Milan and Real Madrid. Attack-conscious Italian international right-back bought on the advice of incoming Inter coach Marcello Lippi.

Robson Ponte
Guarani to Bayer Leverkusen
Young attacker whose idol is former Guarani, Napoli and Brazil striker Careca. Small but highly skilful and quick, Ponte is both a creator and finisher.

Marko Rehmer
Hansa Rostock to Hertha Berlin
A talented centre-back who chose Hertha ahead of Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund. Broke into the German national team at the start of the season.

Ebbe Sand
Brondby to Schalke
Danish League top scorer last season and shone at France 98. Says Schalke will suit him because they are a working-class club.

Andrii Shevchenko
Kyiv Dynamo to Milan
Reported to have cost anything between £10 and £16million. The Ukrainian attacking superstar is expected to be the 'new Van Basten' at San Siro. Huge expectations but has the maturity to deal with the hype. See East Europe, page 44.

Mark Van Bommel
Fortuna Sittard to PSV Eindhoven
Though only 22, he has been Fortuna Sittard's first-choice libero for more than five seasons. A cool and classy defender who chose to go to PSV rather than Ajax.

Marseille to Merseyside...Titi Camara

Johan Vogel
Grasshopper to PSV Eindhoven
Swiss revelation at Euro 96. This versatile 22-year-old can operate anywhere in midfield or at the back.

Christian Worns
Paris Saint-Germain to Borussia Dortmund
Moved to PSG from Bayer Leverkusen 12 months ago but never settled in France. A tenacious man-marker but also comfortable on the ball. Cost Dortmund £4.3million.

Gianluca Zambrotta
Bari to Juventus
A 22-year-old bought for £7million. Can play anywhere in the attacking third – left or right side of midfield, as playmaker or up front.

Man with a mission

Klaas-Jan Droppert asks Frank Rijkaard to assess his progress as Dutch national coach

Well respected...the Dutch players backed Rijkaard's appointment as Holland coach

WHEN Frank Rijkaard ended his playing career in July 1995, many thought they had seen the last of him.

Despite his impressive list of honours, including four Champions League titles, the former Ajax and Milan player had never given the impression that he felt quite comfortable in the frenetic, egocentric world of soccer. Indeed, he did move away from the game and set up a company selling underwear.

But helping Ajax to the Champions League title had done more to Rijkaard than he had ever expected, and he felt he could make a valuable contribution to the game by bringing to it his vast experience.

After a short training course, he was added to national coach Guus Hiddink's France 98 staff. At first, people thought it had been done to satisfy the players of Surinam origin, but when Hiddink took over at Real Madrid after the tournament, it was not Johan Neeskens, his chief assistant, who replaced him, but Rijkaard.

There was some opposition to the decision, especially from the coaching union, who complained it was improper to appoint a man without significant coaching experience. But the players backed the decision, claiming Rijkaard had collected enough wisdom as a player, under the world's top coaches, to teach them a trick or two.

Holland have played six games under 37-year-old Rijkaard's guidance. One win, four draws and a defeat are the results so far as they tune up for the European Championship. Rijkaard talked to *World Soccer* about his new career.

World Soccer: You've been national coach for a few months now. How do you like it?
Frank Rijkaard: So far, so good. They made it easy for me to step in. From the start I have been surrounded by a fantastic coaching staff and I've got a team that performed well under Guus Hiddink.

What's your opinion of those who say you're not suitable because of your lack of coaching experience?
It didn't worry me. I followed the discussion, but I've got the job and that's the way it is. Now I can focus on the things that are really important.

There are many kinds of coaches. How would you describe yourself?
You must try to be yourself, otherwise players won't take you seriously and they won't follow your instructions. You have to know instinctively when you should rise above or when you should stay within the group. But it's too early to give a full description of myself as a trainer.

You're known as a friendly person. Can you keep that attitude as national coach?
As long as you take the decision that you have to make, I can't see why not. In this job you have to stick to your vision. Personal sentiment doesn't count, even if it concerns players who are friends or ex-colleagues.

As a player you worked with many coaches. What did you learn from them?
Johan Cruyff was one of my first coaches, and that always makes a big impression. He believed in taking the initiative in a match. Sacchi was tactically very strong. Then Capello took over, he was his own man. Rinus Michels made a very big impression on me by his charisma and vision. And Hiddink – see what he did during the preparation for France 98. It's due to him that the Dutch team have such a good name in the world.

What's been your contribution to the national team?
I'm taking over where Hiddink finished. If you look at the squad, many of the players were selected under Hiddink. But every coach has his own views.

Which, in your case, is using a right winger.
It's a new period in which I can try certain things. Using Boussatta or Reuser deep on the right is one of them.

Hiddink selected several English Premier League players for his World Cup squad. Now Van Hooijdonk, Hasselbaink, Jonk and De Goey don't seem to be part of your plans.
It has nothing to do with the Premier League. For instance, Van Hooijdonk hasn't played for a long time. But all these players are on a long list of potential internationals and may be added to the squad.

What do you think of Rangers [and former national coach] Dick Advocaat claiming that you are lazy for not going to Glasgow to watch Giovanni Van Bronckhorst?
It's improper. Van Bronckhorst has been selected three times. Of course I will drop by Glasgow one day, because I'm interested in all the players. On the other hand, I have to set my priorities about how to fill the positions. If I've got two players for the left wing (Van Vossen and Overmars), it's no use selecting Van Bronckhorst as well.

Holland are co-hosts of Euro 2000 and play only friendlies instead of qualifiers. Is that an advantage?
I wouldn't say we play only friendlies. Many opponents play with their country's honour at stake. In the draw against Portugal, there were some ferocious tackles. And what about Argentina? They hadn't forgotten the result of that quarter-final in Marseille. All of them were motivated opponents with the mission to defeat Holland.

You won the European Championship in 1988 as a player. Can you do it as a coach?
Euro 2000 is a big challenge. We made a very good impression in France and have some outstanding players but we still have a long way to go. For now, the main goal is getting ready.

Late show...Kees Van Wonderen

Right option...Dries Boussatta

Top scorer...Ruud Van Nistelrooy

GOALKEEPERS

Oscar MOENS
01.04.73. AZ Alkmaar, 1 cap
Eccentric who loves to bring a certain showiness to his saves. Made his debut as a second-half substitute against Ghana last October, being selected instead of Hesp and De Goey to give him some experience.

Sander WESTERVELD
23.10.74. Vitesse Arnhem, 0 caps
Was angry at Rijkaard for preferring Moens against Ghana, but was on the bench for the first time against Morocco in April. A solid keeper with the longest goal kick in the League. Could be at Liverpool next season.

DEFENDERS

Jean Paul VAN GASTEL
28.04.72. Feyenoord, 4 caps (2 goals)
Captain of the Dutch champions and back in the squad after an impressive season at Feyenoord. Took over from Ronald Koeman at his club. Takes free-kicks just as precisely as his predecessor. Also plays in central midfield. Scored from a penalty on his debut, against Brazil in 1996.

Kees VAN WONDEREN
04.01.69. Feyenoord, 4 caps
Solid defender who reached the top at a late stage, something even Louis Van Gaal admitted he never had expected. Made debut against Ghana. Plays centre-back at his club, but full-back in the national team.

Bert KONTERMAN
14.01.71. Feyenoord, 2 caps
Revelation of the season. Quickly adapted to the highest level. Played with Jaap Stam (now Manchester United) at FC Zwolle, Cambuur Leeuwarden and Willem II Tilburg, before Stam was sold to PSV and reached the national team. Konterman replaced Van Wonderen against Argentina and made an impressive debut marking Batistuta.

Marc VAN HINTUM
22.06.67. Vitesse Arnhem, 4 caps
Selected for the first time at 32, making his debut against Germany last November. Benefited from injuries to Bogarde and Numan and the brilliant run by his club. Left-back who loves to attack.

MIDFIELDERS

Dries BOUSSATTA
23.12.72. AZ Alkmaar, 4 caps
First player of large Moroccan community in Holland to earn national team call-up. One of the options on the right. Made debut against Germany, but has found it difficult adapting to highest level.

Martijn REUSER
01.02.75. Vitesse Arnhem, 2 caps
Made debut against Ghana in Rijkaard's second game. Was neglected in the following matches, but recalled to the squad for the friendly against Morocco. Learned his skills at Ajax before moving to Vitesse after a row with coach Morten Olsen. Prefers to play behind the strikers.

Giovanni VAN BRONCKHORST
05.02.75. Rangers, 9 caps (1 goal)
Playmaker at Ibrox. Was a member of Holland's World Cup squad but didn't get a game. Now back in the squad and had a solid performance against Morocco. Can be used on the left or in central midfield.

Michel KREEK
16.01.71. Vitesse Arnhem, 1 cap
Former Ajax and Perugia player. Now central midfielder at Vitesse, and captain in their best season. Made debut in a friendly against France in 1995. Was recalled to the squad for the Morocco game, but had to withdraw because of injury. Can play in central midfield or on left flank.

Peter VAN VOSSEN
21.04.68. Feyenoord, 24 caps (8 goals)
Back in the national team after a five-year absence. Scored against Peru on the night that his friend Rijkaard made his debut. Was a member of the USA 94 squad before losing his place; his form has revived after his transfer to Feyenoord. Combines moderate technique with a large dose of hard work.

FORWARDS

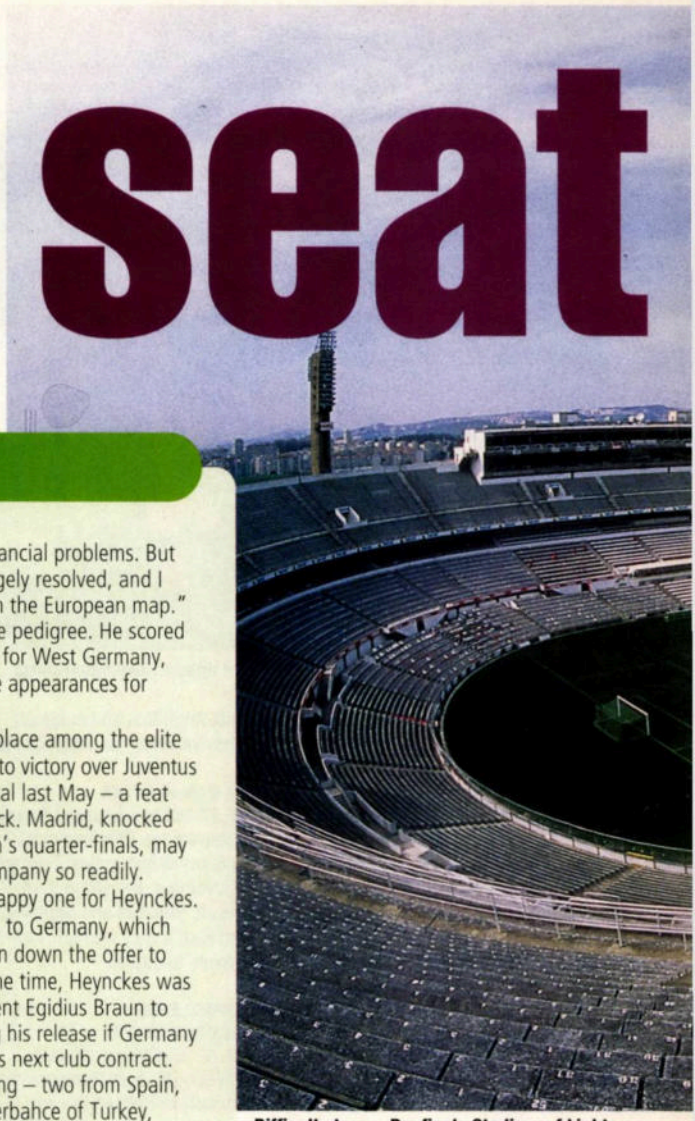
Ruud VAN NISTELROOY
01.07.76. PSV, 4 caps (1 goal)
Holland's latest discovery. Top scorer in the Dutch League and a valuable stand-in for Kluivert or Bergkamp. May get his chance now that the World Cup couple haven't scored a single goal under Rijkaard so far. Has a bright future.

Michael MOLS
17.12.70. FC Utrecht, 7 caps
A splendid season at Utrecht has earned him a transfer to Rangers, but he hasn't yet performed for Holland like he does at club level. Made debut in 1995 in a friendly against France. A disappointing performance meant he had to wait a long time for a second chance. Missed the World Cup, but is back in the squad. Needs a goal to put the worries behind him.

Workaholic...Peter Van Vossen

The hottest seat

Keir Radnedge reports on the big Benfica bust-up



Difficult stage...Benfica's Stadium of Light

Heynckes: 'I can succeed'

JUPP HEYNCKES really does believe he can succeed where controversial coach Graeme Souness has failed, and make Benfica great once more – or at least regain the Portuguese championship, which they last won in 1994.

Heynckes is the 53-year-old German who has been contracted by president Joao Vale e Azevedo to take over from Souness at the season's end. Already he has put to rest fans' fears that he will merely import a German colony of players to replace the Brits in whom Souness vainly placed so much faith.

Azevedo, announcing the impending parting of the ways with Souness, emphasised that one reason for it was terrace unrest at the import list. That always has been a touchy subject with Benfica, who, until the early 1980s, signed only players from either Portugal or its African colonies – such as Eusebio from Mozambique.

Heynckes says: "I don't know yet exactly how much the president will be able to spend, but I have been promised funds to rebuild the team the way I want. But I do not expect to bring in a lot of German players. I worked in Spain for many years and anyone who knows my work also knows that I don't use that principle.

"I can understand why people might think that. At my old club, Bayern Munich, Thomas Helmer will be on a free transfer at the end of the season and I understand that Mario Basler wants to get away. I have spoken with Uli Hoeness [Bayern general manager]. But that was merely to congratulate him on reaching the Champions League Final."

Coaches are notoriously reticent to criticise each other's work and Heynckes will not be drawn on other specific errors he considers Souness may have made. But he clearly feels that the Scot failed to bring the best out of the Portuguese nucleus of the Benfica squad.

Heynckes says: "I saw the team live for the first time in the recent game against Porto but I've taken a good supply of videos home to Germany. Paulo Madeira is a first-class central defender for Portugal as well as Benfica, Nuno Gomes deservedly holds down a regular place among the forwards in the national squad, Joao Pinto is the best all-round striker in the land, and young Hugo Leal in midfield is just as good as Lothar Matthaus was at his age.

"There is no reason why we should not win the championship and re-establish the club as a dominant power. I know there have been some turbulent times and some financial problems. But I believe these have been largely resolved, and I intend to put Benfica back on the European map."

Heynckes certainly has the pedigree. He scored 14 goals in 39 internationals for West Germany, and 220 goals in 369 League appearances for Borussia Monchengladbach.

As a coach he secured a place among the elite when he guided Real Madrid to victory over Juventus in the Champions League Final last May – a feat promptly rewarded by the sack. Madrid, knocked off their throne in this season's quarter-finals, may well regret having parted company so readily.

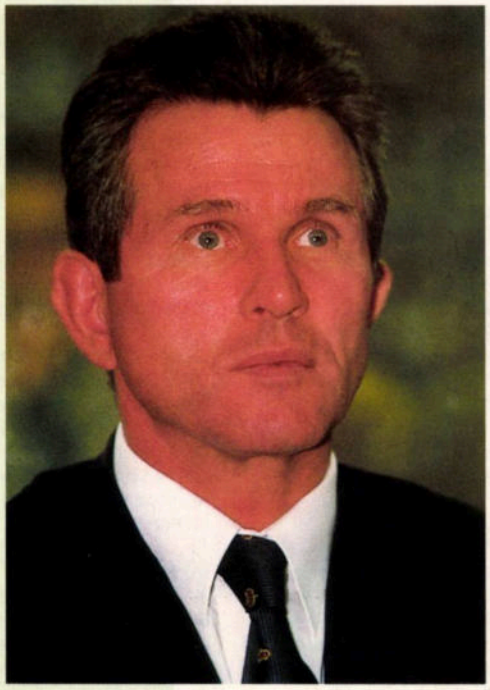
Last summer was not a happy one for Heynckes. His wife fell ill on their return to Germany, which influenced his decision to turn down the offer to become national coach. At the time, Heynckes was advised by federation president Egidius Braun to insist that a clause permitting his release if Germany called again be inserted in his next club contract.

Plenty of clubs came calling – two from Spain, the Nigerian federation, Fenerbahce of Turkey, Vitesse Arnhem of Holland and Benfica's local rivals, Sporting. But when Heynckes decided that the challenge of Benfica appealed the most, he ignored Braun's advice. No escape clause is to be found anywhere in his contract.

He says: "If I had insisted on such a clause then it would have undermined me even before I started work. How could I expect to command the players' loyalty if they thought I would abandon them at the drop of a hat to go back home? That's not a serious way to approach a job that demands total commitment."

Heynckes already has his backroom staff sorted out. He will bring to Lisbon the physical training expert he used at Real Madrid and a Portuguese assistant to help with the language. But Heynckes insists: "I will learn Portuguese, just as I learned Spanish."

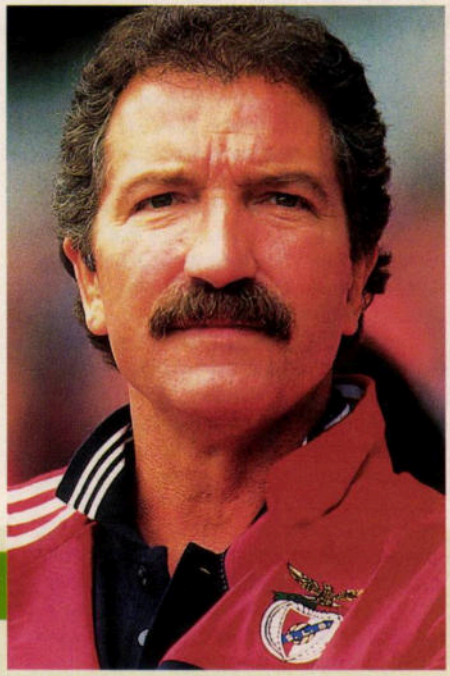
Whether he can learn the language of success any more effectively than Souness may prove another matter.



Optimistic...Heynckes believes Benfica can return to the top

# of all

Set to soar?...Benfica's club symbol, the eagle



Lost out...Souness claims he is owed over £1m

Souness: 'I feel betrayed'

GRAEME SOUNESS was suspended as Benfica coach after a row with president Vale e Azevedo following a 1-1 draw against Campomaiorense. That, for Souness, was the last straw, and provoked him into lifting the lid on the chaotic state of affairs at Benfica.

"I've been involved in football as a player and manager for 30 years but I've never been treated as poorly as this," he said. "I've been treated worse than a dog. It's an absolute disgrace but I'm going to fight it all the way.

"I thought I'd seen everything in football but this tops the lot. I feel cheated, and I've been taken for a ride – which is something nobody's ever done to me before."

Souness claims that Benfica owe him more than £1million, including a bonus for taking the club into the Champions League. But he says: "Money is not the issue – it's the principle of honouring a contractual agreement.

"Nobody, not even Alex Ferguson, could have done a better job at Benfica with the resources available. That's what hurts the most.

"I had agreed with the president that I would be paid for the remaining year of my contract. Then I got a call from a reporter telling me about the suspension. I had no idea what it was all about – but that became clear when I met the president. He told me he hadn't liked the way I behaved on the bench against Campomaiorense and that I was being suspended."

Phil Boersma (assistant to Souness) and Steve Harkness, one of his signings, were suspended for the same reason – allegedly pulling faces at Azevedo behind his back. But Souness insists there was no truth in that claim.

"The president attacked my professional integrity and used that as a lever to get me out without having to pay me what I'm due. The same thing happened to the previous manager and I can see it happening to the next poor guy.

"I've worked at Liverpool and Rangers, where the pressure to succeed was huge, but nothing compares with Benfica. The supporters will accept nothing less than winning the League, and I realised from the start that it was a monster job.

"If managers in the Premiership think they've got it hard, they should try Benfica. You get a draw away from home, you think it's a good result, and then you get pelted with missiles by your own fans.

"Nothing is good enough. It's a national disaster in Portugal if Benfica don't win the title because 60 per cent of the population support them. It's impossible to satisfy that thirst for success given the current financial state of the club, but still they expect the world.

"The Portuguese people are wonderful until they go to watch Benfica play. Then they take their sensible heads off and all common sense goes out of the window.

"The club were eighth when I joined, in November 1997. I got them into the Champions League and into a position to challenge for the title this season. But still that wasn't enough.

"The next job I take, I'll do my homework properly. Nobody will be able to put one over on me again. I'll make sure of that."

Late, late United steal the show

Keir Radnedge on a remarkable night in Barcelona

THE European Cup – under whatever name – has produced some great Finals, some thrilling Finals, some engrossing Finals down the years…but never anything as dramatic as this.

Manchester United's achievement of the treble, matching the feats of Celtic, Ajax and PSV Eindhoven, was eclipsed by the incredible climax to 94 unforgettable minutes in Camp Nou. Just as United and their fans could barely believe it, neither could Bayern. In the chaos that followed Pierluigi Collina's final whistle, United manager Alex Ferguson looked as shellshocked as his opposite number, Ottmar Hitzfeld.

The difference was that Hitzfeld continued to look shellshocked as the preliminaries to the presentation were undertaken, while Ferguson quickly emerged from his stupor to celebrate.

So the United legend goes on, accruing more and more lustre just as the shares accrue in value, the television price goes on soaring and the merchandising profits go through the roof. But, so what? Time enough in the weeks and months ahead for the voices of pragmatism. Whatever cynics may say, this was all about one thing – the greater glory of football, the people's game.

All hail, then, to Ferguson, the most successful British manager of all time. The late Jock Stein may have won more trophies but all were gained in charge of Celtic, which, with due respect to the Scottish game in the 1960s and 1970s, does not compare with the competitive here-and-now of the 1980s and 1990s in both Scotland and England. And, of course, Europe.

Oddly, the greatest threat to United maintaining their primacy stems from their own success. They will be under a different sort of pressure next season – to go one better and retain the Cup. Not only that, but to win the World Club Cup in Tokyo in December and then maybe go on to the inaugural FIFA World Club Championship in January. The cautious may suggest that fixture-enmeshed United will pull out but Ferguson's hunger for success is such that one cannot imagine him rejecting the chance to go where no British manager has gone before.

Whether, after all that, even United, with all their depth of talent, are up to holding on to the European crown (never mind the Premiership and the FA Cup) may be open to doubt. But after the Barcelona fairytale, who would bet against them?

Football at high level is a cousin of showbusiness, but no novelist or playwright would have dared conjure up so dramatic an ending. No one would believe it – even though the Final unrolled amid all the usual theatricals such as a tickets scam, the dancing girls and the local vocal personality (Montserrat Caballe). Then there was the serious stuff, such as Ferguson's decision to cover skipper Roy Keane's absence by switching David Beckham in from the right rather than by moving Ronny Johnsen out of central defence.

No doubting the winners in terms of fan power. That was United, who outnumbered Bayern 10 to one on the streets of the Catalan capital and, it appeared, by an even greater ratio in the stadium itself. If that should have helped United feel at ease, it appeared to have quite the reverse effect. Nerves jangled in defence, with skipper Peter Schmeichel marking the opening minutes of his last competitive game for the club with a couple of confused clearances which gave Bayern encouragement. Thus, in the sixth minute, they went ahead from 'Super Mario' Basler's low, curling free-kick after Johnsen had brought down fast-breaking Carsten Jancker just outside the box.

The gamble of switching Beckham inside left United short of defensive responsibility in midfield. That could have proved costly in the 13th minute when nobody picked up Lothar Matthaus as he ambled forward on to a short free-kick in midfield from Stefan Effenberg. However, Matthaus's angled chip for Jancker carried slightly too much pace.

The rest of the first half was predictable, with United forcing the game – not particularly well, either. Andy Cole could not capitalise when the ball bounced around the Bayern box, then a back-flip header from Dwight Yorke forced a clumsy safety flap from Oliver Kahn.

At the other end Schmeichel and Co continued to struggle more with their own nerves than with Bayern's rare incursions. Once, on the break, Matthaus was again left all alone to dash forward but Alexander Zickler dragged his shot wide.

Half-time arrived with United a puzzle. They had wiped away the best of the rest of Europe and the Premiership by using their wide men in just that manner – wide. Now Ryan Giggs, on the right, was continually cutting inside, as was Jesper Blomqvist (on the few occasions he saw the ball) on the other flank. They were playing into Bayern's hands – and feet.

United stuck with their game plan in the second half while Bayern reverted to a more traditional look, Babbel edging back on the right and veteran Matthaus pushing up into midfield. The Germans might also have scored almost immediately: Jancker strode through and rounded Schmeichel, only for the keeper to recover and concede a corner. At the other end, Blomqvist popped the ball over the bar as he dived to reach a cross from Giggs.

But Bayern were far from finished. Mehmet Scholl marked his arrival as substitute for Zickler by setting up Effenberg to fire narrowly wide and then force a fine fingertip save from Schmeichel. At that stage Scholl threatened to win it on his own. In the 79th minute he chipped against the post and Bayern appeared so secure that the decision to replace tiring Matthaus with Thorsten Fink a minute later appeared of minimal consequence.

Perversely, however, it was Ferguson's own introductions of Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer that decided the game. "They are goalscorers, that's what they do best," said Ferguson later. But even he could hardly have expected they would prove his point in such startling fashion. Both took time to adjust. In that period, Schmeichel – now restored to his most defiant – saved well from Scholl, and Jancker's overhead effort hit the bar with six minutes left.

Time was running out for United. Assistant

1999 CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL

May 26 – Camp Nou, Barcelona

Manchester United 2 (Sheringham 90, Solskjaer 90)
Bayern Munich 1 (Basler 6)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 91,000. **Ref:** Collina (Ita)
Man Utd: Schmeichel – G Neville, Stam, Johnsen, Irwin – Giggs, Beckham, Butt, Blomqvist (Sheringham 67) – Yorke, Cole (Solskjaer 81).
Subs not used: Van der Gouw, May, P Neville, Brown, Greening.
Bayern: Kahn – Babbel, Linke, Matthaus (Fink 80), Kuffour – Basler (Salihamidzic 90), Effenberg, Jeremies, Tarnat – Jancker, Zickler (Scholl 71). **Subs not used:** Dreher, Helmer, Strunz, Daei.
Competition top scorers: Shevchenko (Kyiv Dynamo), Yorke (Man Utd) 8; Zahovic (FC Porto) 7; Inzaghi (Juventus) 6.

referee Fiorenzo Treossi held up the numbers board with three minutes of overtime signalled in red. It was the danger colour but Bayern did not heed the warning. In the last minute of the 90 United forced a corner. Schmeichel charged forward, adding to the penalty box chaos. Effenberg hooked out the loose ball, Giggs drilled it back in and Sheringham turned it inside Kahn's right-hand post.

Bayern's defenders were distraught. But worse was to come. Within two minutes United forced Sammi Kuffour to concede another corner. Beckham curled it in, Sheringham headed on and Solskjaer jabbed the ball into the roof of the net.

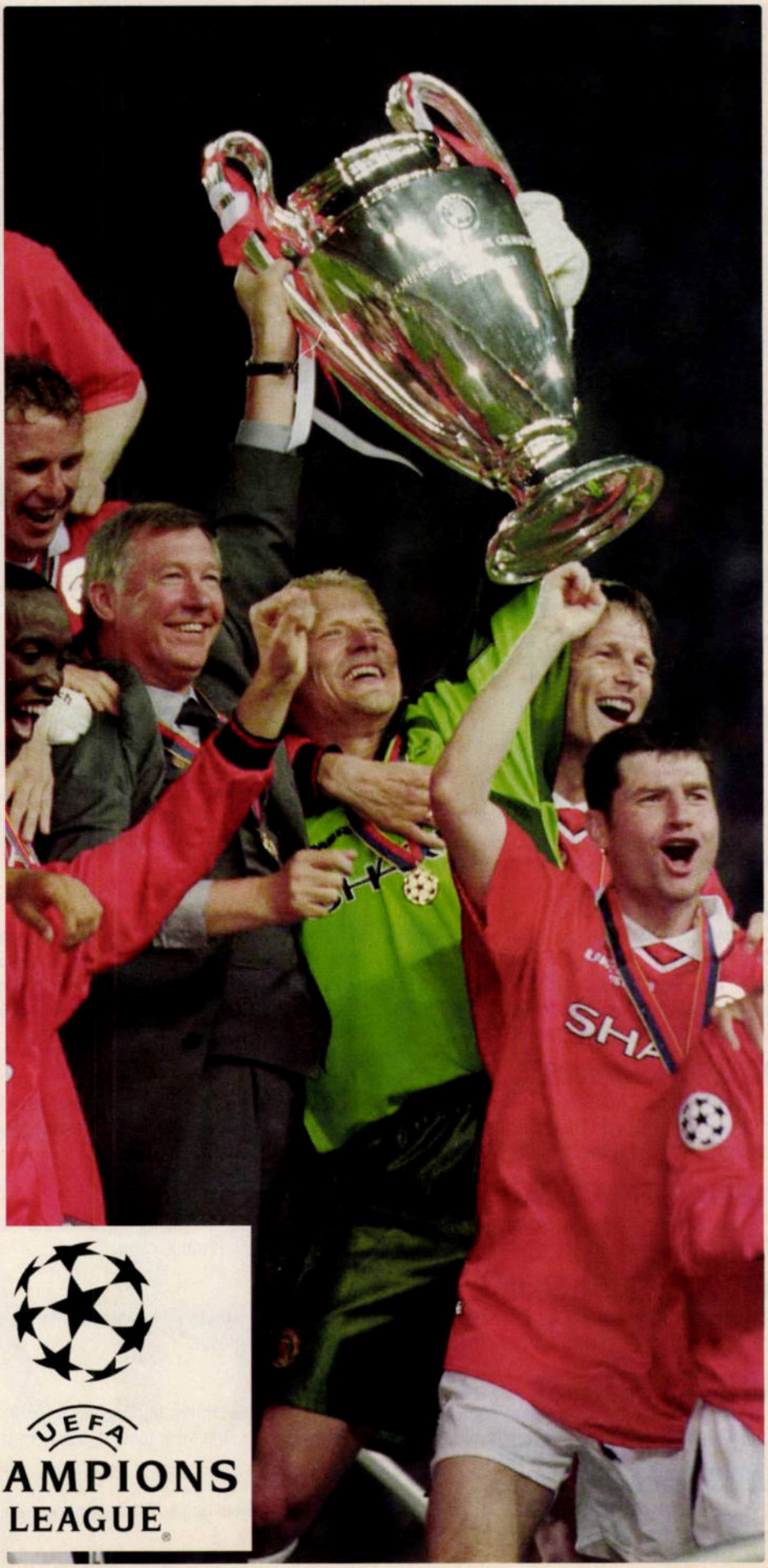
It was all over. Kuffour and Jancker broke down in tears. Matthaus, when he collected his loser's medal, removed it from around his neck as he stepped down from the podium. Hitzfeld said that his players could be proud of their performance, but none of them will ever remember it that way.

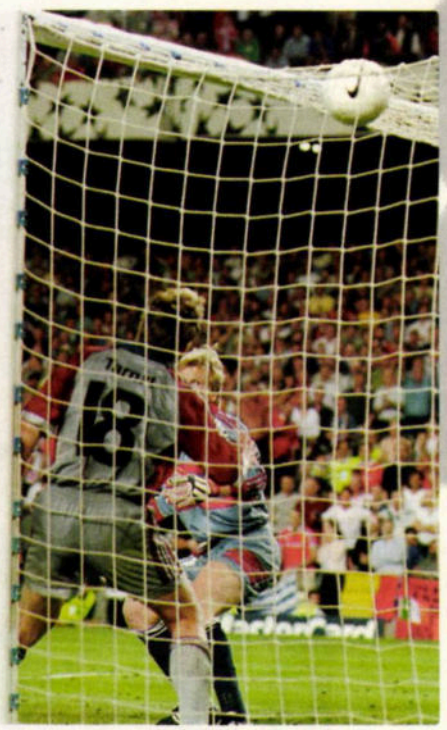
In 1974, Bayern snatched an equaliser in the Final against Atletico Madrid with the last kick in extra time to earn a replay. But football has moved on. A golden goal would have been in demand had Bayern and United finished 90 minutes at 1-1.

But then, no goals will ever be as golden as the two Sheringham and Solskjaer snatched in those dramatic minutes in Camp Nou.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1956 Real Madrid
1957 Real Madrid
1958 Real Madrid
1959 Real Madrid
1960 Real Madrid
1961 Benfica
1962 Benfica
1963 Milan
1964 Internazionale
1965 Internazionale
1966 Real Madrid
1967 Celtic
1968 Manchester Utd
1969 Milan
1970 Feyenoord
1971 Ajax
1972 Ajax
1973 Ajax
1974 Bayern Munich
1975 Bayern Munich
1976 Bayern Munich
1977 Liverpool
1978 Liverpool
1979 Nottingham Forest
1980 Nottingham Forest
1981 Liverpool
1982 Aston Villa
1983 Hamburg
1984 Liverpool
1985 Juventus
1986 Steaua Bucharest
1987 FC Porto
1988 PSV Eindhoven
1989 Milan
1990 Milan
1991 Red Star Belgrade
1992 Barcelona
1993 Marseille
1994 Milan
1995 Ajax
1996 Juventus
1997 Borussia Dortmund
1998 Real Madrid





Ole, Ole...Bayern's defenders cannot believe it as Solskjaer's dramatic winner hits the roof of the net

WHAT THEY SAID...

ALEX FERGUSON

"I didn't like most of the match but the most important thing it showed was that you can't deny our spirit and will to win. That's what won it for us. We got off to a terrible start but I thought we deserved it in the end because we were always pushing to win the game even though we rode our luck in the closing stages. I had been preparing myself for defeat, thinking that maybe it wasn't our year and I would need to keep my dignity. Then, well...at the end I was just stunned. I didn't say anything to the players. I just hugged and kissed them – slavered all over them. It was the greatest moment of my life."

OTTMAR HITZFELD

"United have had a great season and deserved to win the Champions League. They were the better team in the first half when we were lucky to score early on. In the second half we were the better team, we had three excellent chances and hit the post and bar but just did not have the luck we needed. Of course, the match is not over until the referee blows the final whistle but I did not expect to lose it like that and I feel very sorry for my players. It can take days, even weeks, to get over something like that."

PETER SCHMEICHEL

"Not even Hans Christian Andersen could have written a fairytale like that. But one thing I have learned throughout my time at United is that we never give up and we proved it tonight. You cannot get higher than this. Tonight is the night for Manchester United and champagne."

TEDDY SHERINGHAM

"Basler was waving to the crowd in the final minutes. I saw what he was doing and it wound me up. I thought they were getting a bit too cocky and I just wanted to turn it round for us."

OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER

"We had to score some goals after all our pressure. If anyone still wonders why I stay at Man United they could see it for themselves tonight. The spirit in this team is just fantastic."

LOTHAR MATTHAUS

"It's bitter, sad and unbelievable. You can't blame the team. We had things under control for 90 minutes and what happened afterwards is simply inexplicable. The best team didn't win tonight, the luckiest did."

JENS JEREMIES

"We have only ourselves to blame for not doing our job for the whole game. We lost concentration at the end and just did not mark properly for United's goals."

How they

Manchester Utd

Peter Schmeichel
Playing his final game for United and captain for the night in the absence of the suspended Keane. Two crucial saves kept them in the game at 1-0 but his first-half performance, particularly his kicking, lacked confidence.

Gary Neville
Only 24, but now a veteran of 35 European matches. Won the corner which led to United's first goal but for most of the match did not get forward to provide the width needed.

Denis Irwin
Given a difficult time on the left flank by Basler but kept going and persistence helped to create winner for Solskjaer.

Ronny Johnsen
Coped well, apart from an early mix-up with Schmeichel which nearly let in Jeremies. His foul on Jancker gave Bayern the free-kick from which Basler scored.

Jaap Stam
Rarely troubled by Jancker, although he and Johnsen were left exposed as United pushed forward in the final 20 minutes.

David Beckham
Identified by Bayern as United's danger man – and so it proved. Started in a central position and worked hard all night from deep before switching to the right when Sheringham replaced Blomqvist. Took all United's 12 corners.

Nicky Butt
Tidy performance as Keane's stand-in but outnumbered in the second half by Effenberg and Jeremies as United pushed forward in search of an equaliser.

Ryan Giggs
Played most of the match in an unfamiliar role on the right and tended to cut inside. United lacked width until he switched to the left.

Jesper Blomqvist
United's poorest performer on the night. Lacked directness of Giggs and ran into trouble all too often. Biggest surprise was that he wasn't substituted earlier.

Andy Cole
Worked hard but didn't get the service he has become accustomed to. Replaced by Solskjaer with nine minutes left.

Dwight Yorke
Missed a good chance late on but, like Cole, lacked decent service.

Substitutes

Teddy Sheringham
Sensational impact as substitute despite being a bit-player at Old Trafford all season. Ferguson said afterwards that he was surprised Bayern did not switch Babbel from right-back to mark him.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer
Remarkable contribution in brief appearance. Reputation as super-sub supreme is now assured. Almost scored with first touch before moment of glory.

Subs not used: Raimond Van der Gouw, David May, Philip Neville, Wes Brown, Jonathan Greening.

performed

Bayern Munich

Oliver Kahn
Little to do up to final few minutes. Could do nothing about either of United's goals.

Markus Babbel
Switched to right wing-back to counter expected threat from Giggs. Easily dealt with Blomqvist, enabling him to get forward to assist Basler.

Samuel Kuffour
Stayed close to Yorke all night and looked to have snuffed out any threat.

Thomas Linke
Dealt comfortably with United's aerial assaults until the closing seconds.

Lothar Matthaus
Old warhorse lasted 80 minutes, during which time he made full use of the space in midfield to make his surging forays.

Michael Tarnat
Intriguing battle with Giggs for most of the night on Bayern's left. Rarely allowed him space to attack from wide.

Jens Jeremies
Typically industrious performance in central midfield. Solid, dependable but ultimately unrewarded for his efforts.

Stefan Effenberg
Playmaker who had the better of Butt for most of the match. Nearly scored with a clever effort in the second half which Schmeichel managed to tip away.

Mario Basler
Left the field to a standing ovation in the final minute after giving what seemed a match-winning performance. Scored Bayern's goal after six minutes with a terrific free-kick and was never far away from his side's best attacking moves.

Alexander Zickler
Quiet game, replaced by Scholl with 20 minutes remaining.

Feeling champion...Alex Ferguson

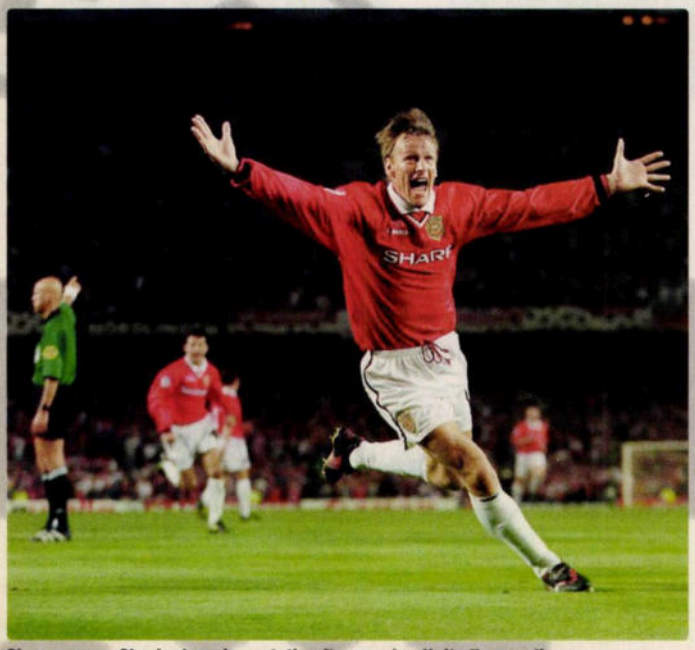
Carsten Jancker
Big physical presence up front; won the free-kick from which Basler scored. Desperately unlucky not to score himself with an overhead kick which hit the bar.

Substitutes
Mehmet Scholl
Lively 20 minutes after replacing Zickler. Twice went close to scoring.

Thorsten Fink
Stopper for a sweeper, he took Matthaus's place in central defence as Bayern set out to defend their lead.

Hasan Salihamidzic
Late, time-wasting replacement for Basler.

Subs not used: Bernd Dreher, Thomas Helmer, Thomas Strunz, Ali Daei.



Glory game...Sheringham is ecstatic after scoring United's equaliser

The action, minute by minute

1. United kick off.

5. Jancker is barged off the ball by Johnsen after Tarnat hooks the ball in from the left. A free-kick is awarded to Bayern two yards outside the penalty area.

6. BASLER curls the ball around the United wall and inside Schmeichel's left-hand post. Man Utd 0 Bayern 1.

7. A Schmeichel and Johnsen mix-up on the edge of the area nearly lets in Jeremies.

9. A low cross from the right by Basler is put wide by Zickler under pressure from Stam.

13. A short free-kick from Bayern. Effenberg plays it forward to Matthaus, who lofts a ball just too far forward for Jancker.

15. Gary Neville's long throw is headed towards goal by Stam but Cole can't take advantage.

17. Basler knocks the ball back to Effenberg, who returns it but Basler can head only weakly at Schmeichel.

21. Beckham wins a corner after Giggs dispossesses Tarnat. Resultant cross put behind by Jeremies. From second corner, Yorke's close-range effort is pushed away by Kahn.

26. Beckham's corner is pushed away by Kahn at the near post.

29. Zickler shoots wide from a Jancker lay-off after Matthaus's impressive run from deep.

31. Beckham's corner bounces through the entire defence unchallenged.

32. Matthaus strides forward and shoots over from 25 yards.

37. Basler cuts in from the left, is tackled by Butt, the ball falls to Zickler whose shot is blocked. Babbel heads over from the resulting corner.

41. Beckham's free-kick from 35 yards sails wide.

43. Kahn dives at the feet of Giggs after a dummy by Cole on Yorke's through-ball.

45. Giggs's shot is deflected by Kuffour for a corner. Beckham's cross goes straight into the arms of Kahn at the near post.

Half-time: Man Utd 0 Bayern 1.

46. Jancker's run into the area ends in a challenge by Irwin, but he still manages a shot at goal. Schmeichel turns the ball around for a corner.

51. Giggs wins a corner on the right. Beckham's cross is headed over by Johnsen.

54. From a Bayern corner, Zickler fails to make proper contact. The ball is returned to the area but Kuffour heads wide.

56. Giggs fires in a cross which Blomqvist, under pressure from Kahn, hits over from close range.

59. Effenberg is booked for a late tackle on Giggs.

64. Basler's long-range lob lands on the top of Schmeichel's net.

67. Sheringham replaces Blomqvist. Beckham switches to the right, Giggs to the left.

68. Stam heads over from Beckham's corner.

71. Scholl replaces Zickler. Effenberg's shot from 20 yards sails just by a post.

73. Effenberg's effort is tipped over by Schmeichel.

79. Scholl hits a post with a clever chip after a run by Basler from his own half.

80. Fink replaces Matthaus.

81. Solskjaer replaces Cole. With his first touch the Norwegian's header is saved by Kahn.

84. Basler's corner is missed by the unmarked Linke, the ball falls to Jancker, whose overhead kick hits the bar.

86. Sheringham is played in by a back-heel from Solskjaer, but his shot lacks the pace to worry Kahn.

90. Salihamidzic replaces Basler. Beckham's corner is cleared but the ball is fired back in by Giggs through a crowd of players. SHERINGHAM sweeps it into the bottom corner. Man Utd 1 Bayern 1. Irwin wins a corner on the left. With 3mins and 36 seconds of injury time played, Sheringham's header from Beckham's resulting cross is stabbed into the roof of the net by SOLSKJAER. Man Utd 2 Bayern 1.

Hold it...the Parma players get their hands on the UEFA Cup

The golden gate

Parma join the mega-rich in Moscow. Keir Radnedge reports

PARMA send their regrets but they are not interested in defending the UEFA Cup next season. It's not that wiping the floor with weakened Marseille in Moscow's redeveloped Luzhniki stadium was too easy a challenge – though that is how it looked. No, the club directors know there is only one place to be, and that's the Champions League.

This is where Parma will be next season as they continue to underline their status as leaders of the new wave in Italian football – a claim already rewarded before they flew to Moscow by victory over Fiorentina in the Italian Cup Final.

Parma gained promotion to Serie A for the first time in 1990. In 1992 they won the Italian Cup for the first time, in 1993 the Cup-winners Cup, in 1994 the European Supercup and in 1995 the UEFA Cup. Now they happily challenge the tottering elite of Juventus, Milan and Inter while old powers scramble around in Serie B – Sampdoria have just been relegated to join Napoli and Genoa (Torino are being promoted but are unlikely to last long in Serie A).

Parma president Stefano Tanzi was not content merely to glory in victory in Moscow. He also used the occasion to flex his muscles in the international corridors of power – proposing that domestic cup-winners should be admitted not to the redeveloped UEFA Cup but to the expanded Champions League. Tanzi says this would underline the status of domestic cup-winners, now that the Cup-winners Cup has been wound up.

Of course, Tanzi talked from a position of particular interest, because Parma defeated Fiorentina on the away goals rule to win the Italian Cup just a week before trouncing Marseille. He said: "Winning the Italian Cup was a proper reward for all the efforts we have put in. It's not a consolation prize by any means. It's like a mini championship. The proof is that the Final was between two of the most successful teams in Serie A this season.

"On that basis, winning the Cup is a major achievement and should be recognised as such, internationally. It should be put to UEFA that the Cup-winners should be admitted to the Champions League. Some people might find that controversial but at least we should start talking about it.

"Is it fair that the winners of a domestic competition should go into a competition such as the UEFA Cup, which is there for the clubs who did NOT win anything?"

In the Final, Parma were clear favourites against a Marseille side who had been performing erratically at the top of the French League – constantly swapping the lead with Bordeaux – and who were missing a string of key men.

World Cup-winning striker Christophe Dugarry, Italian Fabrizio Ravanelli, midfielder Peter Luccin and defender William Gallas were all banned after the semi-final brawl against Bologna. Thus Marseille's prospects of withstanding the creative talents of Hernan Crespo, Juan Veron, Abel Balbo and Dino Baggio were limited to say the least. But they had only themselves to blame.

Parma's second UEFA Cup success in

five seasons maintained Italy's domination of the competition, which clubs from Serie A have now won eight times in the past 11 seasons.

The process of wiping the floor with Marseille began when Hernan Crespo punished a rare defensive blunder by Laurent Blanc in the 26th minute. Blanc, the experienced Marseille captain, under-estimated the power needed for a back header to goalkeeper Stephane Porato, presenting Crespo with a gift opportunity to sidefoot the bouncing ball into the net. It was his sixth goal of the campaign and he described it as the most important of his Parma career.

Poor Blanc. After sitting out Barcelona's Cup-winners Cup victory over Paris Saint-Germain two years ago because of injury, he missed France's World Cup Final success last summer through suspension.

Ten minutes later it was 2-0, Paolo Vanoli beating Porato with a textbook downward header after Diego Fuser pulled the ball back from the right corner flag. Fuser, a UEFA Cup Final loser last year with Lazio, could have had no doubts that his luck had changed.

Man of the match Crespo, scorer of 28 goals in League and cup matches this season, nearly fired a third seconds later, but Porato pushed his 20-yard drive over the bar. Parma were not, however, to be denied for much longer. Any faint Marseille hopes of a second-half revival were punctured in the 55th minute when Chiesa, showing no signs of the hamstring injury that had threatened his presence in the game, volleyed home Veron's cross. It was Chiesa's eighth goal of the UEFA Cup campaign.

Marseille, seeking to add the UEFA Cup to the Champions Cup they won in controversial circumstances in 1993, had little to offer save the occasional solo sortie by Jocelyn Gourvennec. World Cup man Robert Pires worked his heart out in midfield but their best scoring chance was wasted by Liverpool-bound Titi Camara in the 70th minute. The substitute shot an angled effort badly wide after a neat pass from Gourvennec.

As for Scottish referee Hugh Dallas, he could hardly have expected such a quiet game following the recent Rangers-Celtic duel, when he needed four stitches in a head wound after being hit by a coin thrown from the crowd. One yellow card – for Patrick Blondeau of Marseille – was his sole disciplinary intervention.

Fan trouble was reported by police later but none of the problems in Moscow's first, controversial, European final was caused by Italian or French visitors. All 646 arrests were among Russian fans, most for minor public order offences.

As far as the football was concerned, however, it was aptly described from Marseille's point of view as a "nightmare" by coach Rolland Courbis.

"What can I tell you?" he asked reporters. "We are very upset with the result. We expected a hard match because the quality of the opposition was strong but the first goal did nothing to help us. After the second goal it was mission impossible. After the third goal it was simply a nightmare."

At least Courbis had the grace not to lean on the absentees as an excuse. He said: "We prepared thoroughly and professionally for this match and we had 11 players on the pitch, just like our opponents. We had chances, too, but did not take them. In those circumstances, you always lose."

By contrast, Parma coach Alberto Malesani was delighted, saying: "We simply have very good players and that is the reason for our win. To say that I am satisfied doesn't say it right at all. I'm overwhelmed and already looking forward to an even better season next year."

That meant, of course, in the Champions League. Certainly not in the UEFA Cup. Judicious use of the new riches on offer within the Champions League means – according to Tanzi – that Parma should never again sink "that low". For example, while the winners of this season's Champions League receive around £14million, the winners of the expanded tournament next year will collect up to £35m.

Nor will UEFA be pushed to find such a prize. Next season income from TV rights and sponsorship is estimated to be around £450m. UEFA will hang on to £100m for its own costs and subsidies to the minnow federations, with the remainder spread among the clubs and federations involved in the Champions League.

Tanzi is well aware that such riches can only help increase the gap between the haves and the have-nots. No prizes for guessing where he intends to see Parma.

Heading for a fall...Marseille were overwhelmed in the Final

1999 UEFA CUP FINAL

May 12 – Luzhniki stadium, Moscow

Parma 3 (Crespo 26, Vanoli 36, Chiesa 55)
Marseille 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 61,000. **Ref:** Dallas (Sco)

Parma: Buffon – Thuram, Sensini, Cannavaro – Fuser, D Baggio, Boghossian, Vanoli – Veron (Fiore 77) – Chiesa (Balbo 73), Crespo (Asprilla 85).

Marseille: Porato – Issa, Blanc, Domoraud, Edson (Camara 46) – Blondeau, Brando, Bravo, Pires – Gourvennec – Maurice.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

	(as Fairs Cup)
1958	Barcelona
1960	Barcelona
1961	Roma
1962	Valencia
1963	Valencia
1964	Zaragoza
1965	Ferencvaros
1966	Barcelona
1967	Dinamo Zagreb
1968	Leeds
1969	Newcastle
1970	Arsenal
1971	Leeds
	(as UEFA Cup)
1972	Tottenham
1973	Liverpool
1974	Feyenoord
1975	Borussia M'gladbach
1976	Liverpool
1977	Juventus
1978	PSV Eindhoven
1979	Borussia M'gladbach
1980	Eintracht Frankfurt
1981	Ipswich
1982	IFK Gothenburg
1983	Anderlecht
1984	Tottenham
1985	Real Madrid
1986	Real Madrid
1987	IFK Gothenburg
1988	Bayer Leverkusen
1989	Napoli
1990	Juventus
1991	Internazionale
1992	Ajax
1993	Juventus
1994	Internazionale
1995	Parma
1996	Bayern Munich
1997	Schalke
1998	Internazionale

Money talks – again

Lazio were just too strong for Cuper's troopers in Birmingham. Keir Radnedge reports

Last hurrah...Lazio celebrate landing their first European trophy after victory in the last Cup-winners Cup Final

AN Italian club were first to win the Cup-winners Cup back in 1961; so, neatly, an Italian club were, neatly, the last winners. From Fiorentina to Lazio; Florence to Rome. Not such a long journey.

Some 150 miles and 38 years of football history reduced to one last duel. The final Final. The end of the Cup-winners Cup. Evidence, if you like, that the league concept has triumphed for reasons that have more to do with finance, commerce and the bottom line than imprecision, drama and the goal-line.

As a gesture to sentiment, a pre-match parade featured one player from all the past winning teams. Ironic that Villa Park should have been the venue; after all it was William McGregor, one of Villa's original mentors, who also was a leading light in the creation of the Football League more than a century ago.

His club's home was an appropriate cemetery in which to bury the competition that was meant, originally, to represent the apotheosis of cup football.

Lazio and Mallorca were not the glamorous contestants one might ideally have chosen. But then their presence in the Final was further evidence of why the Cup-winners Cup had outlived its day. Football nowadays has to be about glamour, to match the impossible demands of greedy television executives. Lazio are big, of course, and one of the most successful clubs of the late 1990s – anywhere. But they are not Juventus or Milan; just as Mallorca are not Real Madrid or Barcelona.

This did not devalue either club's achievement in reaching the Final, particularly Mallorca. Lazio, barring accidents, had always been expected to make it. But it was, for Mallorca, a remarkable conclusion to their first season in European competition.

Apparently unprepossessing matches can often surprise and thus it proved. Two goals in the first 11 minutes offered not merely an exciting opening but the prospect of more fun and games to come from two sharp counter-attacking sides and two uncertain defences.

The Mallorca defence was the more rickety of the two and Lazio coach Sven Goran Eriksson must have been irked by his men's failure to punish them more severely.

Barely seven minutes had gone when Pancaro hammered a long up and under from inside his own half, and way out on the right. Mallorca's defence had ample time to see it coming yet somehow Vieri out-jumped Olaizola – who should not have been left to mark him anyway – to head goalwards. Roa was caught off his line and could only tip the ball on beneath the crossbar.

Italian teams are renowned for their ability to defend a lead. But Lazio, who had staggered through the previous few weeks, were not now up to this most basic of jobs. Within four minutes Mallorca were level.

Soler, a winner of this trophy with Barcelona back in 1989, strode forward, sent Stankovic through, and Dani, behind the ball and thus not offside, stabbed home.

Mallorca reverted to their pre-match strategy and sat back in their own half, prepared to soak up the pressure. Lazio, presented with the initiative, had few ideas about what to do with it. Almeyda looked painfully cramped in midfield, while Mancini's distribution failed to match his vision.

Even so, Lazio tested Mallorca's resistance and the Spanish side repeatedly were found wanting when the ball was in the air, even though Vieri was handicapped by having to wear a heavy bandage following a collision with Roa.

"We will rock you!" blared out over the public address system as the teams returned for the second half. No doubt both had that intention but neither achieved it.

Eriksson and his opposite number, Hector Cuper, did not change their tactics, though Mallorca encouraged Ibagaza to roam further and wider while, for Lazio, Mancini edged further forward and offered the stately Almeyda a little more room to thunder forward his direction-changing long passes.

The contrast of a Mallorca side playing a counter-attacking game against a Lazio short on confidence and cohesion meant the spectacle became an increasingly ragged one. Lazio insisted on forcing the game but the best chance fell to Mallorca. A full-blooded angled drive from Lauren forced Marchegiani to make his only save of the game – and that simple statistic justified the eventual outcome.

Lazio kept on pushing. Not

One up...Salas congratulates Vieri

Czech mate...Pavel Nedved volleys home a spectacular winner

always effectively. Vieri, for once free of the glue-like Siviero, hit a dangerous cross behind the in-rushing Salas. But the tide was flowing Rome's way, and Mallorca paid a decisive penalty for their vulnerability in the air. Under pressure from Vieri – Mallorca thought he handled – Siviero failed to clear a cross and Nedved spun to half-volley the loose ball into the bottom left-hand corner of Roa's goal.

This was Lazio's first European trophy, a dividend from their £70m investment in new players last summer – ironically, Nedved cost Lazio a mere £1.5m in 1996 – and coming just a year after losing the 1998 UEFA Cup Final. That defeat was Lazio's only upset in two European seasons.

Skipper Nesta grinned broadly as he thrust the Cup, one-handed, into the air...the last we will see of it.

May 19 – Villa Park, Birmingham

Lazio 2 (Vieri 7, Nedved 80)
Mallorca 1 (Dani 11)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 33,021.
Ref: Benko (Aut)

Lazio: Marchegiani – Pancaro, Nesta, Mihajlovic, Favalli – D Stankovic (Sergio Conceicao 53), Mancini (Fernando Couto 90), Almeyda, Nedved (Lombardo 83) – Vieri, Salas.
Subs not used: Ballotta, Negro, Gottardi, De la Pena.

Mallorca: Roa – Olaizola, Marcelino, Siviero, M Soler – Engonga – Lauren, Ibagaza, J Stankovic – Biagini (Paunovic 72), Dani.
Subs not used: Cesar Galvez, Carreras, Carlos, Chichi Soler, Fernando Nino, Ariel Lopez.

The action, minute by minute

1. Lazio's Salas fires in the first shot – from outside the penalty box – easily caught by Roa.

7. VIERI heads Lazio in front. Pancaro hammers over a long cross from just inside his own half and out on the right; Vieri out-jumps Olaizola, Roa is caught in no-man's land. 1-0 to Lazio.

11. Mallorca equalise. Soler breaks forward from left-back and pierces the Lazio defence for Stankovic to stride into the penalty box. He squares for DANI, on the near-post edge of the six-yard box, to sidefoot home. All square at 1-1.

20. Vieri is carried off after gashing his head in an aerial collision.

22. Mihajlovic is booked for tripping Biagini in full flight. Jovan Stankovic's free-kick bounces erratically across the Lazio goal.

24. Vieri returns, head bandaged.

27. Roa dives right to fist a Vieri drive wide while Lazio players rage at referee Benko over the sly ankle-hacking to which Salas is being subjected.

31. More Lazio anger, again with Salas the victim when pushed down as he leaps towards a centre from the left.

34. Lazio lay siege to the Mallorca penalty box but Favalli spoils the moment by pushing a left-wing cross beyond the far byline.

38. Vieri booked for handling.

42. Superb rescue work by Pancaro, striding across from right to left to concede a corner after Dani sends Biagini away on the counter.

45. Mancini angles a long cross into the penalty box, Nedved knocks it square but Salas fails to connect effectively with his bicycle kick and the ball loops wide.

Half-time: 1-1.

53. Siviero is booked for dangerous high kicking, catching Dejan Stankovic full in the face when attempting a clearance out on the Mallorca left. Stankovic is replaced by Sergio Conceicao.

60. Mihajlovic fires a 25-yard free-kick just wide of Roa's right-hand post.

69. Marchegiani saves Lazio with a superb reflex stop from an angled drive by Lauren after a Jovan Stankovic cross is deflected beyond the defence.

72. Paunovic replaces Biagini.

76. Paunovic and Jovan Stankovic engineer a dangerous break and Nesta heads out from under the bar for a corner.

80. NEDVED fires Lazio's winner, spinning and volleying home after the Mallorca defence, challenged by Vieri, fail to clear a looping short cross to the edge of the penalty area. 2-1 to Lazio.

83. Lombardo replaces Nedved.

87. Vieri drills wide after a short square pass from Salas on the edge of the box.

90. Fernando Couto replaces Mancini. Marchegiani is booked for time-wasting at a goal kick.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1961	Fiorentina	1973	Milan	1986	Kiev Dynamo
1962	Atletico Madrid	1974	Magdeburg	1987	Ajax
1963	Tottenham	1975	Kiev Dynamo	1988	Mechelen
1964	Sporting Lisbon	1976	Anderlecht	1989	Barcelona
1965	West Ham	1977	Hamburg	1990	Sampdoria
1966	Borussia Dortmund	1978	Anderlecht	1991	Manchester Utd
		1979	Barcelona	1992	Werder Bremen
1967	Bayern Munich	1980	Valencia	1993	Parma
1968	Milan	1981	Dinamo Tbilisi	1994	Arsenal
1969	Slovan Bratislava	1982	Barcelona	1995	Real Zaragoza
1970	Manchester City	1983	Aberdeen	1996	Paris SG
1971	Chelsea	1984	Juventus	1997	Barcelona
1972	Rangers	1985	Everton	1998	Chelsea

Lazio throw it all away

Paddy Agnew in Rome reports on a dramatic climax to the Serie A season

'Milan win Lazio's title'. The ironic headline in Rome daily *Il Messaggero* said it all. When Milan beat Perugia 2-1 on the last day of the season to clinch their 16th Italian League title, it was hard to escape the sensation that this was not so much the title that Milan had won as more the title that Lazio had thrown away.

Watching Milan celebrate, my mind went back to a morning last January, spent at the Milan training ground of Milanello. On that occasion, Milan coach Alberto Zaccheroni was categoric. In his first season with Milan, his primary objective was to slowly build a new side that, in the years to come, would restore Milan to its habitual place on top of Italian and European soccer.

"We are not looking to win the League title," Zaccheroni said. "It's more important that we get certain things right for the future and that we qualify for the Champions League. Then, if the chance of battling for the title comes along, well that's a bonus..."

Such words made sense. For a start, the cautious Milan attitude was a season-long factor that helped keep the pressure off and allow his side move into the white-hot thick of the championship battle of the last month almost without realising it.

Secondly, Zaccheroni, like the rest of us, knew that at least two of his major rivals, Lazio and Parma, were better equipped to win this season's title.

The fact that, in the end, Milan ran out the winners says as much about the failings of their rivals as about their own undoubted strengths. Put simply, Lazio and Parma both failed to win important games (including ones against Milan) when it really mattered.

It is also true, of course, that Milan started the season with an advantage. Their last two disasterous seasons (11th and 10th respectively in Serie A) had left them with a Wednesday evening free of engagements. While Fiorentina, Parma and Lazio were involved in European and Italian Cup struggles, Milan watched on TV.

Parma pulled off a spectacular double, defeating Olympique Marseille in the UEFA Cup Final just one week after they had beaten Fiorentina in the Italian Cup Final. Lazio, likewise, went all the way in the Cup-winners Cup, winning the last ever edition of that competition.

The distractions of European and Italian Cup competitions certainly offer a partial explanation as to why Milan finished the season by far the strongest side in the land, winning their final seven games in a row. Yet, the busier programme faced by Lazio, Fiorentina and Parma does not explain all.

Take Lazio, for example. Seven points clear of Milan with eight games to play at the beginning of April, they effectively lost the title battle in three consecutive April games against Milan, Roma and Juventus. Held to a 0-0 home draw by a defensive Milan, Lazio then went on the defensive on the eve of their city derby with Roma.

Lazio players told the media during the build-up to what has now become, far and away, Italian soccer's most keenly contested derby, that, sure, Roma can win the derby but we will win the League title.

That mental approach seemed wrong. In the derby itself, Lazio were never at the races, run off the park in a 3-1 defeat in which the less accomplished Roma were far hungrier for a win.

The derby defeat struck a fatal blow at Lazio's title prospects. Not only did it undermine confidence and generate tension – as exemplified by the Lazio players' subsequent media blackout – but it also left them without their entire first choice defence for their next match against Juventus. A typically bitter derby ended with two Lazio players, Alessandro Nesta and Sinisa Mihajlovic, sent off and another defender, Giuseppe Pancaro, booked and thus suspended for the Juventus game.

Deprived of their first-choice defence, Lazio then crashed 3-1 at home to Juventus. In three days, their seven-point lead over Milan had been whittled down to just one point. Worse still, Lazio's fixture list for the final five championship days looked much tougher than that of Milan.

With the pressure mounting in earnest, it became a question of who would make the first probably fatal mistake. For three games, both sides won but, in the end, Lazio dropped the all-important points, drawing 1-1 away to Fiorentina on the second last day. No visiting side had managed to win at Fiorentina all season long and even this powerful Lazio side was unable to reverse that trend.

On the very days that Lazio were losing to Roma and Juventus, Parma too lost fundamentally vital points. Above all, they were beaten 2-1 at San Siro by Milan in a game in which they had played the better football for much of the match and in which they had opened the scoring. Not for nothing, do all the Milan players say, that Parma game was their seasonal turning point.

One week later, Parma again dropped vital points when held to a 1-1 home draw by relegation-bound Sampdoria.

Fiorentina, too, failed in vital matches at precisely this same period, losing to Inter and Bologna and being held to a draw by Bari in those all-decisive first three April fixtures. It is true, of course, that Fiorentina's challenge had already been compromised by two important factors – firstly, the February injury to Argentinian captain and flagbearer, Gabriel Batistuta, and then the divisive behaviour of their talented Brazilian striker, Edmundo, whose determination to return to Rio for the carnival at precisely the moment Batistuta had gone down injured hardly bespoke of team spirit.

Milan have won the title at the end of a strange Italian season, one conditioned first and foremost by the fact that all the big Italian names started the season with multinational squads still struggling to recover from the stress of the World Cup. That stress, in turn, prompted injuries to key players: Brazilian Ronaldo of Inter, Alessandro Del Piero and Frenchman Zinedine Zidane of Juventus, Christian Vieri and Nesta of Lazio, Argentinians

Title winner...Albertini celebrates Milan's last-day victory

Last-gasp success...Guglielminpietro scores Milan's opener against Perugia

Nestor Sensini of Parma and Batistuta of Fiorentina etc.

A look at this season's final Serie A table prompts a number of reflections.

First and foremost, the G7 of Italian soccer (Milan, Inter, Roma, Lazio, Juventus, Parma and Fiorentina) continue to rule, with four of them due to contest the Champions League (Milan, Lazio, Fiorentina, Parma). The other three are probable UEFA Cup contenders and that notwithstanding the fact that Juventus and Inter both had miserable seasons (largely thanks to Manchester United).

Secondly, it has to be pointed out that among the four relegated sides is one Sampdoria, a team which eight seasons ago won its first ever title. The Sampdoria policy of selling on their best players has, apparently, finally come home to roost. As for the rest, Udinese and Bologna did more than could have been expected, Bari repeated last season's Serie A survival while Venezia were the biggest surprise of the minnows.

The final images of this dramatic season, however, are of the last day. While key 'historic' figures in the Milan group – Liberian striker George Weah, defender and captain Paolo Maldini (see profile, right), midfielder Demetrio Albertini and Croat playmaker Zvonimir Boban – celebrated at Perugia, some of their defeated Lazio rivals, including Vieri and Mihajlovic, broke down and wept at the Olympic stadium in Rome. The Milan players sang in an unexpected triumph. The Lazio players wept for a title they know all too well they should and could have won.

Pazienza...there's always next season.

Pro-file Paolo Maldini

Still on top... the young veteran keeps chasing the honours

FOR Paolo Maldini, the wheel came full circle on April 28 this year in Zagreb. That was the day he won his 100th international cap for Italy in an all-too-friendly 0-0 draw with Croatia.

Eleven years earlier, a 19-year-old Maldini had made an impressive international debut in a 1-1 draw in Split against the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Maldini seems to have been around a long time. Although he is only 31 (on June 26), he is now in the 15th season of a career in which he has been centre-stage for most of the decade, winning three Champions Cups and five Italian League titles with Milan, the club for which he made his debut as a 16-year-old in a 1-1 draw with Udinese in January 1985.

With Italy, too, Maldini has been busy, playing in three World Cups (1990, 1994, 1998) and two European Championships (Germany 1988, England 1996), and having the misfortune to lose a World Cup Final (to Brazil in 1994) and a World Cup semi-final (to Argentina in 1990).

He has been a regular choice in the left-back berth for World Best selections over the decade, and is not so much an outstanding footballer as a national idol. He is tall, blue-eyed and handsome, a media darling, considered to be the clean-living, hard-working, fabulously wealthy neighbour that every Italian mother wanted as her son-in-law.

In May 1994, when fashion designer Giorgio Armani turned up at Italy's pre-World Cup headquarters to present the new team outfits, he was asked if there were any squad members who might make the grade on the catwalk. Sure, he replied, Paolo Maldini would make a terrific model.

Italian soccer fans and professionals alike have an equally high opinion of Maldini. When *Gazzetta Dello Sport* commissioned a survey a few years back to find the most 'representative' and most 'Italian' footballer of the modern age, the answer from fans, coaches, journalists, and scientists was emphatic – Paolo Maldini.

To the Italian mind, there is no more complete Italian player than Maldini, considered to be a perfect mix of physical strength, footballing intelligence and mental resilience.

Ironically, too, just when his career might have been expected to go into sharp decline, Maldini has continued at his own high level. Italy's France 98 quarter-final exit, Milan's miserable last two seasons and his own far from convincing displays – although carrying an injury – for Italy at Euro 96 all could have signalled the beginning of the end.

Not so. As Milan found themselves engaged in a desperate head-to-head struggle with Lazio right down to the wire in this season's title race, then much of the credit for that unexpected revival has to go to captain Maldini, very much a foundation stone on which new coach Alberto Zaccheroni has built his side.

He is the first to admit that Milan's good run this season was greatly helped by the fact that they started with only one major objective – qualification for the Champions League. The Milan camp and Zaccheroni did such a good job last summer, telling everyone that Plan A was to create a new team good enough to contest the championship in the years to come but NOT this season, that everyone believed them.

Fact file

Club Milan
Country Italy
Born June 26, 1968, in Milan
International debut March 1988, v Yugoslavia
International caps 100 (6 goals)
Honours Italian League 1988, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996; Italian Super Cup 1992, 1993; European Cup 1989, 1990, 1994; European Supercup 1989, 1990, 1995; World Club Cup 1989, 1990; World Footballer of the Year 1994

Milan have spent most of the season dawdling along, far from the sort of pressures to which title-starved Lazio have been subjected. Once Milan got themselves on to the front row of the grid, however, Maldini argued that they deserved to be there, dismissing those such as Ronaldo who claim that Milan have been merely lucky this season.

"When people tell me that I have been lucky, I say 'good, let's hope that luck stays with me,'" says Maldini. "It's cheap, though, to say that Milan are where they are this season only because of good luck. Fortune, after all, favours the brave."

As he assesses his career from the wrong side of 30, Maldini admits that things have changed. He now spends much more time with his family – he and his tall, flaxen-haired wife, Adriana, have a baby boy – and says: "It's not like it once was when, before a big game, you'd think of nothing else all week. Perhaps it's just because of the passing of the years, but I am certainly aware that things have changed. I can do my job now with a smile. I'm more relaxed, even if I still prepare in deadly earnest for a match."

Looking back over his international career, Maldini intriguingly points to Italia 90 and not to USA 94 as his biggest disappointment, explaining: "I went away from the Los Angeles Final in 1994 convinced that we had given our all, and could not have done more. At Italia 90, on the other hand, when Argentina beat us in the semi-final, I felt we were beaten by a weaker side."

Maldini is the son of Cesare Maldini, coach to Italy at France 98 and before that a distinguished Milan defender who captained his club to a 2-1 European Cup win against Eusebio's Benfica at Wembley in 1963. Maldini junior concedes: "It would have been a fairytale to have won the World Cup in a side coached by my father but you cannot have everything in life."

One thing that Paolo Maldini could yet have, however, is the record for the most Italian international appearances. He is No 2 on the list behind the current national coach, Dino Zoff, who ended his legendary goalkeeping career with 112 caps.

Paddy Agnew

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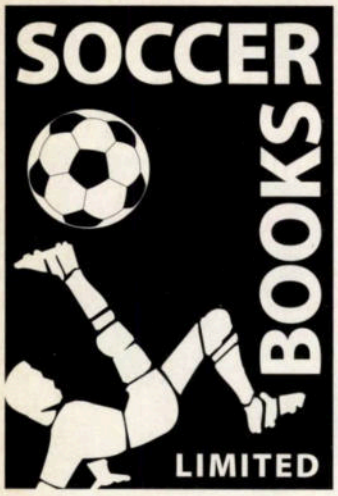

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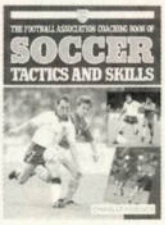

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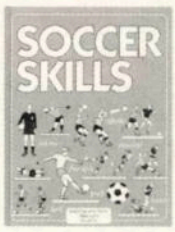

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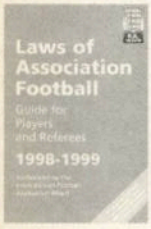

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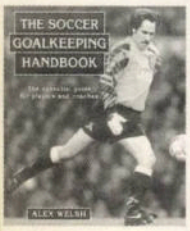

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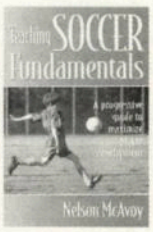

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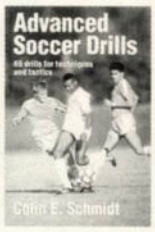

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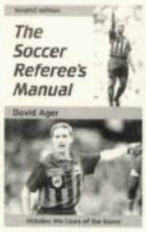

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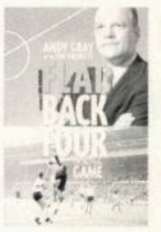

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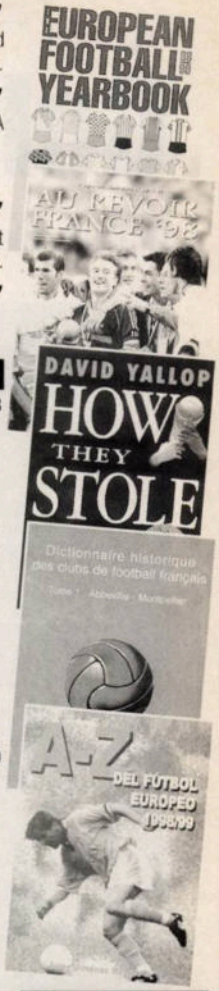

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Golden Boot no longer fits

Graham Turner reports on Sukerman, Toshman and new king Cuper

Prize asset?...Suker's World Cup scoring feats have cut little ice at Real Madrid

HEARD the one about the Golden Boot, the actress and the teddy bear? Davor Suker doesn't find it in the least bit funny.

Within the past year, Suker has won the Golden Boot by top-scoring at the World Cup, come third in the FIFA Footballer of the Year poll, and is now getting a not-so-golden boot up his backside at Real Madrid.

It is a curious fact of modern footballing life that playing regularly is not always the No 1 priority for your average professional. Sukerman, as he was fondly referred to in what now seems like the dim and distant past, has not been able to nail down a first-team place under any of Real Madrid's last three managers, but has maintained his market value by appearing regularly for Croatia.

While Jupp Heynckes was in the driving seat, Suker sat meekly and quietly in the back seat with his safety-belt comfortably buckled. Under Guus Hiddink he observed events dispassionately even though he was not selected even when Fernando Morientes went through an un-purple patch. Then, John Toshack. Within days, Suker had developed an acute allergy to Welshmen.

Tosh was distinctly unamused when Sukerman and his henchman Robert Jarni raced off to Zagreb to play for Croatia in a friendly against Italy. Jarni at least attended the Sunday-morning training session which Toshack had specifically re-arranged so that his internationals could practise a bit before they left. Suker did not show up.

When he returned, Toshack made the odd comment about players who always seem to have something wrong with them come the weekend, then undergo a cure in time for national team duty. Suker responded with some highly slanderous comments about Tosh taking commission on transfers, and by ordering him to accept his transfer to FC Porto in part-exchange for Brazilian Mario Jardel, a deal that would lead the club along the highway to destruction.

To dig an even deeper trench between Sukerman and Toshman, enter Ana Obregon, Davor's girlfriend, a well-built actress with a high profile in the pink press. She promptly began to swing her handbag in Tosh's direction.

The net result was the decision by club president Lorenzo Sanz to offer full backing to the coach in a dressing-room which, in any case, was in need of a good seeing-to. Suker found himself suspended without pay and banned from the training ground. He received a lukewarm sympathy vote from some team-mates, notably Predrag Mijatovic and Roberto Carlos, who did not like the idea of such heavy-handed punishment.

But, oh my word, even worse was to come. Sukerman appeared in Madrid waving a Harrods bag and, adopting a see-if-I-care stance, told reporters that, guess what, he'd been to London. What was in the bag, they asked. A present for Ana, he responded, pulling out a teddy bear with a £16.92 price-tag on it.

Tosh immediately focused on the dosh. Not much to spend on a classy girlfriend like Ana Obregon, he commented, with an oblique insinuation that Mr Fayed's profit margins might make the teddy bear a somewhat less than Golden-Boot-quality gift. Handbags were flourished again and Suker threatened to take the club to court. By all means, said Sanz.

The conclusion to be drawn from the tale of the Golden Boot, the actress and the teddy bear is that one of the world's top players is trying to head-hunt a coach prepared to give him a bit of football.

Suker will not be the only one leaving Bernabeu. Toshack's early appraisal is that it's time for a clear-out of some of the highly-paid players. Away performances have continued to issue loud messages about lack of commitment and Real have been depending on the attacks of hiccups that have affected their direct rivals in order to stay near the league placings which would give the club desperately-needed Champions League access. Fortunately for Real, Valencia, Celta, Mallorca and Deportivo have all slipped when seemingly poised to breast the tape. By doing so, they have handed the title on a plate to Barcelona and allowed Louis Van Gaal, for all the vitriol directed at him before Christmas, to savour his second bout of victory celebrations in Placa de Sant Jaume.

Success has been built on the great performances of Luis Figo, who has had the sort of season schoolkids dream about. The quality of his ball skills and crossing from the right flank have generated chance after chance.

Rivaldo has grabbed the lion's share of the headlines with his solo skills, but the importance of two of Van Gaal's platoon of Dutchmen should not be under-estimated.

Patrick Kluivert has shown signs of maturing into a top-class striker. He has led the Barcelona line with strength and selfless endeavour, and has shown he has the ability to produce the unexpected. Maybe, more importantly, he is trying to master his reaction to the type of taunting which provoked a red card against Belgium during last summer's World Cup. The other major influence is Frank De Boer. Since his arrival from Ajax in January, Barcelona have added an extra dimension to their game by being able to play out from the back with greater aplomb and creativity.

> **"Suker is head-hunting a coach prepared to give him a game"**

At the same time, Philip Cocu, bitterly criticised in the early phase of the season, has made a significant contribution – and not only on account of his workrate. His positional sense has been crucial in allowing Rivaldo to move from the left touchline into the central or inside-left areas where he does so much damage.

These wayward movements had left Barcelona lopsided once the ball had been lost, but Cocu has not only acted as bodyguard for the Brazilian but, as the goal charts show, has burst forward effectively enough to get into scoring positions.

Yet the real success story of the season, once again, concerns Hector Cuper's Real Mallorca. With Suker's teddy-bear resources, they have managed to combine a very dignified League campaign and an historic appearance in the last Cup-winners Cup Final in the club's first European campaign. Inevitably, Mallorca's top players have

caught the eye of the Big Boys in Spain and elsewhere, with striker Dani, defender Marcelino and midfielders Lauren and Vicente Engonga featuring in many European shopping lists.

Ten players left at the end of last season and, with both Veljko Paunovic and Leo Biagini likely to be repatriated by Atletico Madrid, who loaned them out this season, there could be as big a change-over at the end of this campaign.

There are, however, reasons to suspect that the would-be purchasers will struggle to reap a better harvest from individual Mallorcans than Cuper has. Of the players who left last year, central defender Ivan Campo's reputation has not been enhanced by his move to Real Madrid and even the young, gifted Juan Carlos Valeron has produced only sporadic brilliance for Atletico Madrid.

Mallorca's success has been based on collective rather than individual talent, and Cuper's serious, pragmatic approach to the job has been the cornerstone. The real loss would be the coach rather than players – and this now seems increasingly probable as Valencia pull the purse-strings wide open to persuade him to take over from Claudio Ranieri.

Another plus point for Cuper is that, in Spain's 3-1 win against Croatia in Seville's brand new Olympic Stadium, no club provided more players for the squad than Real Mallorca. A couple of years ago, that idea would have been laughable. However, Marcelino, Dani and Engonga not only produced stirring performances, but the last two chipped in with their first international goals.

National team manager Jose Antonio Camacho is Spain's mirror image of Cuper's Argentinian brand of pragmatism. He has managed to create a new mood of excitement among the Spanish public with audacious team selection and highly effective motivational techniques. But Camacho insists adamantly that Spain's record does not entitle them to any whiff of optimism or euphoria about Euro 2000.

What has become obvious is that Spain is still a rich breeding ground for talent. Even the dumbest of club presidents is beginning to realise it can hardly be coincidence that, since winning the UEFA Under-21 Championship 12 months ago, Spain have triumphed in the Meridian Cup at Under-17 level, the World Youth Cup in Nigeria and the European Under-16 Championship.

The easy fact to swallow is that the young Spaniards are good. It has maybe gone unnoticed that all these sides have not only been superbly coached by Inaki Saez and, in the Under-16s, Juan Santisteban, but have also been very shrewdly head-hunted by a coaching network headed by Teodoro Nieto.

Young talent has been detected in unfancied teams; ushered on to the international podium via contributions to impressive team efforts; and, belatedly, brought to the notice of top clubs because of their international pedigree. The players themselves, in all the age categories, have publicly demanded more chances in their own backyard and less reliance on imported labour.

This theme, which has often been aired in these pages, is now becoming a Big Issue in Spanish football – especially as some of the sides most heavily laden with foreign passports are struggling mightily to avoid relegation.

Making his point...Real Madrid coach John Toshack is ready to offload Suker

Pro-file Ivan Helguera

Versatile star bound for Real Madrid

JOSE CAMACHO may be a coach who believes in 'hombres, no nombres' – roughly, it's what a player produces in the next game that counts, not how famous he is or who he plays for – but Ivan Helguera's debut for Spain after less than a dozen top flight outings still ranked as a surprise. Tellingly, while the masses shook their heads in bewilderment, insiders at his club, Espanyol, were able to shrug and smile at the inevitability of it all.

Roma's decision to recruit Helguera on the strength of just 14 games for Spanish Second Division side Albacete made plenty of headlines in the summer of 1997; less publicised were the frustrated attempts of then Espanyol coach Camacho to persuade the midfielder-cum-defender to move to the Barcelona club instead of Italy.

Helguera's Roman adventure lasted just one disappointing season, but Espanyol hadn't forgotten Camacho's counsel and last July the player was theirs. Given Helguera's impressive form out of the blocks at Espanyol, Camacho wasted no time in throwing the youngster into the international ring, against the Italians in their own den no less.

"I was really fired up for that game," recalls Helguera, whose second half performance in midfield went a long way to securing Spain a 2-2 draw. "I was keen to prove that Roma didn't give me a fair chance to prove myself. Not that I regret my original decision; the experience helped me tremendously. But Zdenek Zeman had pretty fixed ideas about his midfield and that made it hard for me." Especially after sweating blood in training sessions.

"I knew that Italian football would be demanding," he continues, "but Zeman goes way over the top. Sometimes we used to train with 20kg weights on our backs! Fortunately, Espanyol gave me a second chance to prove myself."

As Helguera's first full campaign draws to a close, it is not just Camacho who recognises his abilities. "He's the best sweeper in Spain," says Espanyol coach Miguel Angel Brindisi of a player who had never played in defence before this season. Real Madrid, who've agreed to pay £4.8million for Helguera, clearly agree. They also like the 24-year-old's adaptability: on his international debut against Italy he reverted to his role of midfield playmaker, and this season he's also played for Espanyol in front of the back four. So where exactly is his best position? "Now that I've been playing centre-half it takes some getting used to changing back to midfield. I still prefer playing there, though, because it gives me the chance to get forward."

For the moment, John Toshack's plans for Helguera are unclear. Will he form part of a redesigned defence or will he fill Redondo's shoes as the team's midfield general? "Ivan's an excellent player and a great signing wherever he plays," says Fernando Hierro, one of Madrid's few untouchables. "He's an all-rounder with great technique and I'll be delighted to be competing with him for a place in the team. I hope he becomes a better player than me."

That could be some task, but Helguera has shown he loves a challenge. Next up, competing with Pep Guardiola for his favourite role in the Spain side. "It's difficult because there's lots of competition in my position," he admits. "At the moment I can only aspire to be in the shadow of Guardiola. But I've got time on my side. My ambition is to become Spain's playmaker. If I keep on working at my game, who's to say that won't happen?" If experience is anything to go by, certainly not Jose Camacho.

Jeff King

Fact file

Club Espanyol
Country Spain
Born March 28, 1975, in Cantabria
Previous clubs Albacete, Roma (Ita)
International debut November 1998, v Italy
International caps 3

Caught short...Crespo (right) lies in wait to pounce on Blanc's poor back header in the UEFA Cup Final in Moscow

More bad luck for Blanc

Andre Duclos on Marseille's Final failure in Moscow

DID Laurent Blanc – with all deference to England's Glenn Hoddle – err in some past life? How is it that the Fates so inexorably pursue him?

All seemed to be going so well when he scored that golden World Cup goal against Paraguay last summer. But when it came to Croatia in the semi-final at Stade de France, he foolishly raised a hand to Slaven Bilic, who made a meal of it. Blanc was sent off; and thus missed the World Cup Final.

So to Moscow and the UEFA Cup Final, where Marseille had no fewer than four players suspended. You would not have given Marseille much chance in those circumstances against a team as strong as Parma, but Blanc was singing a happy, optimistic song.

Then what happens? The game is still relatively young when Blanc makes the mistake of a tyro, rather than a seasoned veteran, with a feeble little header back to keeper Porato that was never going to get there. Parma snap up the gift and weakened Marseille now have an Everest to climb.

One doubts they could have climbed it, but manager Rolland Courbis hardly improved their prospects with his excessive caution. Things would have been hard enough for poor Florian Maurice even with a partner alongside him, given the forbidding opposition of two of the world's finest defenders, Fabio Cannavaro and Lilian Thuram.

How unhappily both Marseille and Bordeaux, our leading League teams, bowed out of their respective Euro tournaments.

Back home, Lens won the League Cup, beating Metz 1-0. It was odd that the Final of this competition, so much younger than the French Cup, should have drawn a crowd of 80,000 crowd to Saint-Denis. They witnessed a great day for 21-year-old Daniel Moreira, the scorer of the goal, who has come through so strongly in the latter stages of the season.

How strange to think that the player, very much a local boy, at first failed to break into the club's youth system, to his bitter dismay. Indeed, so upset was Moreira that he swore he would have nothing to do with the club he adored, and took himself off to Guingamp. This season, however, he managed at last to join Lens as a mature player, though Guingamp were deeply reluctant to let him go.

In these mercenary days of millionaire footballers who largely pursue the main chance, it is touching to read the words of young Moreira: "The Lens jersey has always been in my heart. I've dreamed about it. You cannot know what pride it means for me to wear this jersey."

Lens just now are equally proud of him. "At last I've got you back again," said the manager, Daniel Leclercq, who had once coached him at the Valenciennes youth centre. Lens paid heavily for snubbing their local lad in the first place: getting him back cost £2.5million.

But it was hard going for Moreira at first, weighed down as he was by the burden of succeeding that gifted playmaker Stephane Ziani, who had taken off for Spain.

Not until Moreira had scored a vital winner in the last minute of extra time against Sochaux in the League Cup semi-final did he feel liberated from that weight. "I no longer felt afraid on the field," he says, adding that it was the subsequent big League match against Marseille, which Lens won 4-0, that really put the cap on it. Six goals in five matches proved his point abundantly.

Now he is looking forward to playing in next season's UEFA Cup, having been on the bench during the great Champions League adventure this season.

For Moreira, League Cup success was a wholly new experience. Not so for centre-forward Pascal Nouma; it was his third triumph in this competition. He had previously won with Paris Saint-Germain in 1995 and again with Strasbourg two years later.

In the French Cup Final, little Sedan put up an amazing resistance, going down by a solitary goal to Nantes. The club could be coming into Division One next season, and their showing in the Cup Final suggests that they would by no means be out of place. Patrick Remy took over as coach at the start of the season when Bruno Metsu suddenly left for Valence; and how well things have gone both for him and for Sedan.

"What Sedan have done is exceptional from every point of view," says Remy. "All this with a club whose budget is only 24 million francs [£2.4m], with players for whom nobody would have given a franc at the start of the season. It's grandiose, even historic. Only Sochaux in 1988 did as well as this as a Second Division club. And they had ampler means than us."

Remy was realistic about the game with Nantes, saying that the odds against his team were 1000-1 and that, given the choice, he'd take Sedan's recent victory over Gueugnon in the League above winning the Final. Nantes, he said, were the cherry on the cake. One can only say that the cherry went near to being swallowed. Remy still keeps in touch with that formidable coach Guy Roux, for whom he played at Auxerre in the early 1980s, and Roux sent him a video of Nantes in action.

Dieter follows Uli into Europe

BERLIN will be back at the heart of European football affairs next season after erratic Hertha ensured a place in the Champions League. That means the rest of the continent will need to try to outwit not just one Hoeness but two – Dieter fulfilling at Hertha the general manager role in which brother Uli is so effective at Bayern Munich.

Indeed, it was Dieter Hoeness who sounded the rallying cry after Hertha ensured their European qualification with a 2-0 win over Hansa Rostock. "We're coming, Europe!" he shouted. The victory had ironic political undertones because the club who now represent the unified Berlin swatted opponents from the former East Germany.

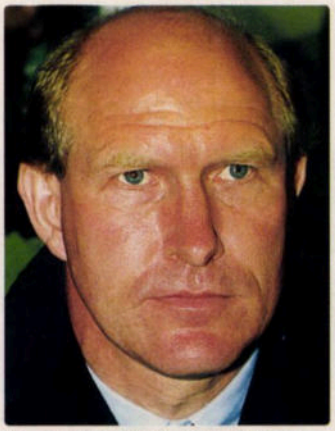
Meanwhile, Bayer Leverkusen made sure of finishing second to earn their own Champions League spot with a 0-0 draw away to MSV Duisburg. However, Bayer striker Ulf Kirsten courted controversy when he was substituted in the 73rd minute because of a thigh injury. As he was leaving the pitch to jeers from the MSV fans, Kirsten responded with a rude gesture. "He just wanted to tell me that he wanted to be substituted one minute later," laughed Leverkusen coach Christoph Daum.

Federation disciplinary chiefs did not see the joke and demanded a written explanation. Kirsten may well start next season under suspension.

Stuttgart made virtually certain of staying up by beating Freiburg 3-1 thanks to Guinean midfielder Pablo Thiam, who scored in the closing minutes of each half.

Strugglers Eintracht Frankfurt kept up their fight to avoid accompanying Borussia Monchengladbach out of the Bundesliga. They surprisingly defeated Borussia Dortmund 2-0 – thus dealing a significant blow to the 1997 European champions' hopes of a return to the most prestigious club competition.

If Dortmund miss out on the Champions League then they can blame their away form, having won only twice all season. The jury remains out on the talents of coach Michael Skibbe, who was surprisingly promoted last year.



Big in Berlin...Hertha's Dieter Hoeness

Unfortunately for the image of German football – at a time when the bid to host the World Cup in 2006 is, at last, gathering momentum – a string of hooligan problems raised their ugly heads.

The first was the opening in Essen of the trial of four men accused of attacking French gendarme Daniel Nivel in Lens at the World Cup finals last year. Then serious trouble erupted at two matches in the regional league.

First more than 100 people, including 27 police officers, were injured and 28 hooligans arrested after a game between Kickers Offenbach and Waldhof Mannheim; at one stage police fired warning shots to quell the country's worst outbreak of soccer-related violence for years.

Then, two days later, police were called into action again when fans invaded the pitch during a Leipzig derby between VfB and Sachsen after VfB opened the scoring in the 22nd minute. The game resumed after a 10-minute break.

Keir Radnedge

Heading for Europe...Hertha's Michael Preetz (right)

Pro-file Oliver Neuville

Frail import helping a German revival

AT FIRST glance, Oliver Neuville does not seem equipped for the rigours of the top-class game. Short of stature and with a shirt that looks two sizes too large for his frail frame, he cuts the figure of a boy.

Yet appearances can be deceptive. In these disappointing, uncertain times for Germany at international level, when they have so spectacularly lost their aura of invincibility, Hansa Rostock striker Neuville represents one of the few rays of optimism, catching the eye for both club and country this season with his intelligent movement, excellent touch on the ball and aptitude for making and taking chances.

While the post-USA 94 decision of former national boss Berti Vogts to widen his selection options by calling up foreign players with Teutonic roots might not have borne fruit with the Brazilian-German forward Paulo Rink of Bayer Leverkusen, Swiss-born Neuville has certainly not proved a five-minute international wonder.

German fans, willing supporters of anyone with the potential to restore the tarnished reputation of their national team, care little that the 26-year-old was born and brought up in the Italian-speaking region of Switzerland, that he is a 100 per cent product of the Swiss League – coming to the fore during an exceptional five-year spell at Servette of Geneva – or that he owes his German passport to the fact that his father was born in the Rhineland border town of Aachen.

What counts is his extraordinary ability and the way he has effortlessly integrated into the *Nationalmannschaft* scheme of things since making his debut for his adopted country in a friendly against Malta last September.

Growing in assurance with each international outing, Neuville has done much to keep Germany on track for the Euro 2000 finals, whipping in a great cross for Marco Bode to head in Germany's first in the 3-0 win in Northern Ireland in March and completing the scoring when Finland were dispatched 2-0 in Nurnberg four days later – his first international goal.

Luck has been an ally, too. He was an unused substitute when Germany succumbed to an embarrassing 3-0 defeat by the United States in Jacksonville early this year and so was spared the subsequent media witch-hunt. "I can only speak as I find and, for me, the spirit in the German camp is good," says Neuville. "There's a great determination to make it to Euro 2000 and defend the title won in England. The team is in transition, but we have all pulled together and fought our way back to the top of our group. There has been a lot of criticism of the national team, some of it justified, some of it completely exaggerated. But I can't see us not qualifying for Euro 2000.

"I can't believe how well things are going for me this season. I'm one of the leading scorers in the Bundesliga, Hansa Rostock have climbed out of the relegation zone after a terrible start and I'm a national team player, in the same line-up as Lothar Matthaus and Oliver Bierhoff. I couldn't ask for any more."

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Hansa Rostock
Country Germany
Born May 1, 1973, in Gamborogno, Switzerland
Previous clubs Gamborogno (Swi), Locarno (Swi), Servette (Swi), Tenerife (Spa)
International debut September 1998, v Malta
International caps 7 (1 goal)
Honours Swiss League 1994 (Servette)

United reclaim the prize

Ferguson's dream comes true as Red Devils land fifth title in seven years

Bubbling over...the champagne goes flying as Man Utd celebrate their Premiership triumph before an ecstatic Old Trafford

MANCHESTER UNITED had to wait until the final day of the League season to clinch a remarkable fifth title in seven years. Alex Ferguson said it was his most satisfying championship victory as United manager because it was the first title won on Old Trafford soil.

A 2-1 victory over Tottenham confirmed United's triumph at the expense of defending champions Arsenal, who were simultaneously beating Aston Villa 1-0 at Highbury but had effectively lost the title race when they were beaten at Leeds in their penultimate match.

Ferguson's side thoroughly deserved the title. But while he must take the lion's share of the credit – particularly for riding out a storm of criticism after spending £23million on Jaap Stam and Dwight Yorke – two players stand out: David Beckham and Roy Keane.

Beckham could not have responded to his red card against Argentina at France 98 in a more positive way. Fatherhood, far from inhibiting his game, has given him a new confidence and security – and he has become a better player as a result. His delivery of crosses from the right flank has been a key factor in United's success.

Keane, who missed much of the 1997-98 season with a serious knee injury, has been a dynamic force in United's midfield – even if he did blot his copybook with an alleged attack on a woman in a Manchester bar during a night out to celebrate the title win.

That a United player did not pick up either the writers' or players' Player of the Season award was a mystery to many – but the sheer number of candidates from United and Arsenal worked in favour of the eventual winner, David Ginola of Spurs.

United and Arsenal will be joined in next season's Champions League by Chelsea, who finished ahead of Leeds United and West Ham, but lost momentum in the final straight.

Leeds have come a long way in a short time under David O'Leary, while West Ham recorded their highest League finish since 1986. However, their end-of-season run-in was spoiled by an unpleasant attack by striker Ian Wright on referee Rob Harris's dressing-room after being sent off against Leeds.

At the other end of the table, Blackburn Rovers and Charlton joined Nottingham Forest in being relegated to Division One. Blackburn, champions four years ago, looked to have pulled away from trouble following the arrival of manager Brian Kidd to replace Roy Hodgson. But Kidd proved incapable of stopping the rot caused by Rovers' failure to replace the likes of Alan Shearer, Graeme Le Saux, David Batty, Colin Hendry and Tim Sherwood with players of similar quality. Blackburn now face the impossible task of holding on to the likes of Chris Sutton, Jason McAteer and Matt Jansen, although Kidd's future has been assured by Rovers' financial guardian, Jack Walker.

Money is not necessarily the key to getting out of Division One as Bradford City, under manager Paul Jewell, a 34-year-old former Liverpool apprentice, proved by finishing second behind Sunderland, thus securing a place in the top flight for the first time in 77 years.

Keegan signs up

KEVIN KEEGAN has found the lure of managing England on a full-time basis too hard to resist and has left Fulham to sign a three-year deal, rumoured to be worth £750,000 a year.

Keegan would not discuss figures. "I would not ask you what your salary was. I think that's a personal thing," he said.

His predecessors in the England job, Glenn Hoddle and Terry Venables, were among those touted as his successors at Craven Cottage, but Fulham turned instead to player-coach Paul Bracewell.

Gavin Hamilton

SCOTLAND

Blood spilt in torrid Old Firm clash

THE FINAL League encounter of the season between Rangers and Celtic provided the backdrop for the most controversial 90 minutes for many years.

The timing of the game ensured that it attained the billing of a championship decider and the tensions surrounding the clash, which had been building up in the streets of Glasgow long before the ill-advised evening kick-off, spilled over at Parkhead.

Three players were sent off, four fans were arrested for invading the pitch and referee Hugh Dallas was hit by a flying £1 coin, suffering a painful head injury but bravely choosing to carry on in what had developed into a cauldron of sectarian hatred.

The Old Firm game, televised live throughout the United Kingdom, and shown on TV in 29 countries, lived up to its reputation as the most intense club derby in the world. Such was the nature of the drama that all 29 countries chose to book air time for the 're-match', the Scottish Cup Final on May 29.

Amid all the furore before, during and after the match, the fact that Rangers had inflicted a comprehensive 3-0 defeat on Celtic to regain the championship went almost unnoticed.

The result justified the faith shown by Rangers chairman David Murray in bringing Dutch coach Dick Advocaat to Scotland. Advocaat's unstinting enthusiasm, supreme tactical awareness and flawless man-management all combined to help Rangers win the title after the club had suffered a highly abnormal trophy-less season during Walter Smith's final year in charge.

Advocaat is now aiming to take the club to a higher level, with an extended run in next season's Champions League being seen as an immediate priority.

Celtic must take their share of blame for the mayhem during the Old Firm battle. French defender Stephane Mahe's tantrum after his first-half red card appeared to ignite the ugly scenes which followed, and it is beyond doubt that the coin which injured Dallas emanated from the Celtic support. The four fans who encroached on to the pitch were from that area, with at least one appearing intent on inflicting physical injury on the referee.

The fiasco occurred only a few weeks after Celtic fans were accused of desecrating the memory of Hillsborough victims by shouting pro-IRA slogans during the minute's silence before the game against Motherwell on the anniversary of the disaster.

Prepared apologies, read out after the game by Mahe and Vidar Riseth, also sent off, were never likely to stem the tide of public opinion which arose in the aftermath, and the dismissal of Mark Viduka a week later, for spitting

Flashpoint...referee Dallas is struck

at Dunfermline's Marc Millar, merely fuelled the flames.

The new Celtic supremo Allan McDonald, having only just settled into the boardroom following Fergus McCann's move to Bermuda, has been embarrassed by the turn of events. McDonald, a former British Aerospace executive, must utilise the full extent of his public relations skills to restore confidence in his recently-acquired corporate entity.

The Scottish national team, meanwhile, had a rare victory over Germany in a friendly in Bremen. The result has restored confidence in Craig Brown's side, who now face a vital European Championship qualifier against the Czech Republic in Prague on June 9.

Alan Fairley

N IRELAND

Portadown go into Europe by default

THE Irish Cup Final was not played – for the first time since 1920 – and Portadown will go into next season's UEFA Cup on a technicality.

Cliftonville had qualified to meet them, but before the game could be played they were found to have fielded an ineligible player in their semi-final replay win over Linfield.

The player in question, Simon Gribben, had joined the club earlier this year. He went on as a substitute in the second half against Linfield, but was then discovered to have played for another club – amateurs Kilmore Recreation – in a preliminary round.

Players are allowed to represent only one club in the competition in any one season, and failure to comply means disqualification.

This capped a miserable season for Cliftonville, the 1998 champions, who had to take part in a play-off for their Premiership place.

They gained some consolation by beating First Division runners-up Ards 5-2 on aggregate (1-0, 4-2) but there was depression mixed with relief because Peter Withnell, who had scored four of their five goals, was sent off in the second leg.

Glentoran won their 20th League title – but their first for seven seasons – setting Premiership records with 24 wins and 72 goals. Manager Roy Coyle was well served by players such as 30-year-old defender John Devine (the one survivor from 1992), midfielder Scott Young and forwards Rory Hammill, Justin McBride and Andrew Kirk.

Linfield lost their last chance of the title when losing 3-1 at Glentoran, but go into the UEFA Cup as runners-up. They also won the Coca-Cola Cup, beating Glentoran 2-1.

Ballymena lost 6-3 at home to the new champions in their final game, and within 10 minutes had sacked manager Alan Fraser. He has been replaced by a former Bangor and Glenavon manager, Nigel Best.

Roy Kitson

WALES

Jones treble clinches double

BARRY TOWN, having already clinched the League title for the fourth successive time, made it a double by winning the League Cup.

They beat Caernarfon Town 3-0 at Aberystwyth, a hat-trick from Richard Jones giving them their third successive win in the competition.

The Welsh Cup Final was a dull affair, with the poor condition of the Merthyr pitch a contributing factor. Both Inter CableTel and Carmarthen Town failed to adapt to the conditions and the game came to life only in extra time.

Sion Meredith put Carmarthen ahead with a well-timed run and lob over the advancing goalkeeper, but Inter equalised within two minutes through Darren Porretta's cross-shot.

Extra time failed to separate the sides but Inter's Gary Wager was the hero as his side won the penalty shoot-out 4-2 to guarantee them a place in the UEFA Cup next season.

Cwmbran Town, who finished third in the League, will be Wales's other UEFA Cup participants.

Inter's victory meant that fourth-placed Aberystwyth Town enter European competition for the first time in their 105-year history. They go into the InterToto Cup, against the Maltese representatives in the first round. Major improvements are to be undertaken at Aber's Park Avenue ground during the close season, as part of a long-term plan.

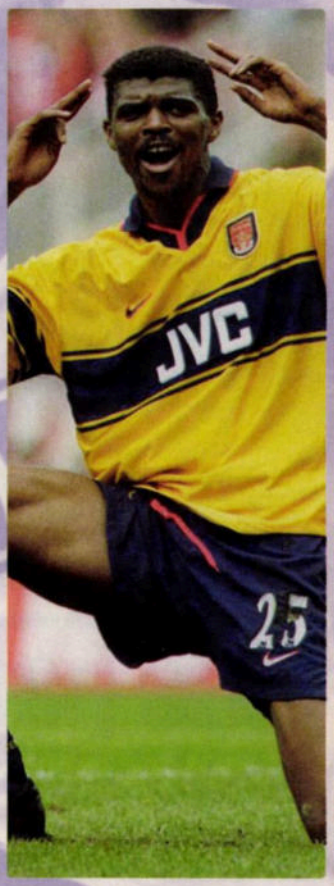
Holywell Town were relegated and will be replaced by Flexsys Cefn Druids, the first club from the north-east to reach the top level.

Druids were the leading club in Wales from the 1870s into the early part of the 20th century.

Mel Thomas

Pro-file Nwankwo Kanu

Nigerian star making an impact at Arsenal



IF ONLY...If only the striker known as Kanu had been able to play for Arsenal six months earlier. It has become a common refrain among Highbury fans, reflecting on a season without a trophy.

How a fit Kanu would have lifted the Gunners last autumn – when they made an early exit from the Champions League and struggled to stay with Manchester United and Chelsea at the top of the Premiership.

Arsene Wenger knows as much. "I waited a year to sign him from Inter and I wished that we had been able to get him earlier," he said, after United had deprived Arsenal of their title. "He has become an important player for us. He has changed the shape of almost every game he's played in."

Wenger finally got his man last December. But by the time medicals had been completed and the Nigerian international received a work permit, it was February. The fee of £4million was a bargain but Wenger admitted he'd taken a chance on a player whose medical history deterred other clubs.

Despite his successful recovery from heart valve surgery, Kanu never figured in Inter's plans. He just wishes he'd been allowed to leave San Siro sooner. "Arsenal wanted me to join them in time for the Champions League group games, especially for those when Dennis Bergkamp couldn't play because of his fear of flying," he said. "But the move took so long to sort out. It was frustrating because nothing was happening for me in Italy."

The beanpole Kanu, still only 22, was a teenage sensation with Ajax. He won three Dutch championship medals, subbed for Clarence Seedorf when Ajax beat Milan in the 1995 Champions League Final, then played from the start the following year when the holders lost to Juventus on penalties.

Wenger's assistant, Pat Rice, said: "We all knew what a talent he was before his heart operation but he's won everyone over with his manner off the pitch, and the things he does on it. During training, the other players stop and applaud when he's shown another amazing piece of skill."

Kanu quickly won over the Highbury fans with the last-minute goal against Derby that took Arsenal to the FA Cup semi-finals. He's a predator in the box and also scores goals of the highest quality. Most of all, though, Kanu has given Arsenal the quality options in attack that they lacked last autumn when Nicolas Anelka and Bergkamp were their only front-line strikers.

Kanu says: "Coming to Arsenal was one of the best moves of my career because they have allowed me to play. I can't wait for the start of next season."

Wenger has frequently used Kanu as a tactical substitute but expects him to start more often in future. "He will get his opportunities," said Wenger. "I expect a lot from him. He can make a huge impact."

Kevin Connolly

Fact file

Club Arsenal (Eng)
Country Nigeria
Born August 1, 1976, in Owerri
Previous clubs Fed Works, Iwanyanwu, Ajax (Hol), Internazionale (Ita)
Honours Champions League 1995 (Ajax); World Club Cup 1995; European Supercup 1995; Dutch League 1994, 1995, 1996; Olympic gold medal 1996

Riot control...violence flared in Rotterdam after Feyenoord were honoured as champions

Title party ends in chaos

Police fire shots to quell Feyenoord disorder

HOLLAND

A FEW minutes after the official honouring of new champions Feyenoord had ended, riots broke out in the centre of Rotterdam. About 200 hooligans clashed with the police and caused terrible havoc in the streets.

Several policemen were forced to open fire, and almost 80 people were arrested.

Feyenoord hooligans are feared for their violence. More than a year ago they fought Ajax fans on a wasteland, and one of the latter group died. Earlier this year, they caused serious trouble in Leverkusen before and after a friendly. Not for nothing did chairman Jorien Van den Herink decide that Feyenoord will not take fans with them to away games in next year's Champions League.

The violence raises the question about whether the safety of foreign supporters visiting Euro 2000 next summer can be guaranteed. Dutch Minister of the Interior Bram Peper called for the urgent adoption of a draft law allowing police to detain suspected hooligans before matches considered at risk. The law should allow the detention of known hooligans and the arrest of trouble-makers from other participating countries.

Before the riots broke out, no fewer than 250,000 fans were celebrating Feyenoord's 14th title, their first since 1993. Soon after the start of the competition, it was obvious that Feyenoord were the favourites. With Ajax in crisis and Bobby Robson struggling to get the right mixture at PSV, the Rotterdam club made for the title, winning 22 out of 29 matches. Much credit goes to coach Leo Beenhakker. After he took over from Arie Haan in December 1997, he transferred a team without self-confidence into a tough-to-beat winning machine.

Beenhakker even managed to put Feyenoord's enfant terrible, Julio Cruz, into the right direction. He scored 15 of their 68 goals. The three centre-backs, Jean Paul Van Gastel, Bert Konterman and Kees Van Wonderen, gave their opponents little opportunity to score, and contributed in Feyenoord's attacking moves.

Willem II Tilburg will participate in the Champions League next season. The team, built by coach Co Adriaanse, is the surprise of the season. They finished second and gained 37 points in the last 13 matches. Adil Ramzi, Willem II's Moroccan midfielder, who came on loan from Udinese, was a crucial factor in taking the club into Europe and has decided to stay in Holland for another year.

With Feyenoord clinching the title and Ajax experiencing one of their worst seasons for decades, everybody thought the other Champions League group stage spot would be claimed by either Vitesse Arnhem or PSV. But both lost many valuable points. Vitesse, never before in position to clinch such an important prize, do not look experienced enough to cope with the pressure, while PSV found it is not enough to depend on the attacking skills of Ruud Van Nistelrooy and Luc Nilis without having a solid defence.

Although Ajax are still ailing, at least they will not end the season without a prize. In the Cup Final they beat another surprise package, Fortuna Sittard, with two Jesper Gronkjaer goals.

Klaas-Jan Droppert

LUXEMBOURG

Jeunesse among the silverware

A CUP-AND-LEAGUE double was on the cards for Jeunesse Esch, confirming their place as Luxembourg's top club. In the Cup Final they beat Mondercange 3-0, following a 7-0 demolition of Grevenmacher in the semi-final. In the League they led Dudelange by one point – and a goal difference of 15 – with a game to play.

Tim Brice

IN LIECHTENSTEIN... The club from the capital, FC Vaduz, exceeded expectations by reaching the eight-club play-offs for a place in the Swiss National Division B. Victories over Tuggen (3-0) and Freiebach (6-0) left them in the clear with three weeks of the season remaining.

Graeme Crawford

BELGIUM

Genk hold on to triumph

A LATE surprise – a 5-2 home defeat by Anderlecht – could not prevent Racing Genk from becoming Belgian champions for the first time.

The little club with a vast potential secured the title with a 2-1 win at Harelbeke to finish clear of Anderlecht and Club Brugge.

Under the shrewd coaching of Aime Anthuenis, who now hopes to revive Anderlecht, Genk became the 15th club to win the League, in its 96th season.

Their first triumph was not without its share of suspense on the final day. The news that Brugge had taken an early lead against Westerlo kept Genk on tenterhooks for the next 23 minutes, during which they were unable to capitalise on the foraging of Croat striker Branko Strupar (see profile, opposite).

Eventually Souleymane Oulare benefited from the good work of Thordur Gudjonsson to fire Genk in front. Oulare, the Guinean bound for Metz next season, reciprocated with the pass from which Icelander Gudjonsson doubled Genk's advantage 40 minutes later.

Genk, formed in 1988 as a new club after the devastation caused by Waterschei and Winterslag going to the wall, were promoted in 1997. Last year they won the Cup. Next season they enter the Champions League in the preliminary stages, trusting that some of their players, at least, will have stayed loyal instead of following Anthuenis to Brussels.

Brugge, meanwhile, completed a 5-3 victory over Westerlo with a penalty by Franky Van der Elst – the perfect finale to a career spanning 800 appearances. Now he moves on to coach the newly-amalgamated Germinal Beerschot Antwerp.

Nicholas Harling

REP IRELAND

Last-day Saints

IT'S a cliché to say that the season just ended was one of the most exciting in years. But this year it's definitely true. The championship was not decided until the final day and on the last Sunday five of the six games had a bearing on either the title or relegation.

The Premier Division was a two-club race and in the end St Patrick's Athletic had three points to spare over Cork City. It was their seventh title and their fourth in the 1990s, but it was the first time that they had clinched the championship in front of their own supporters at Inchicore. A rare goal from Canadian Jeff Clarke won the title for Pat's as they beat Bray Wanderers.

One of the key players in the Saints' success was midfielder Paul Osam. He was voted Player of the Year by his colleagues and named Personality of the Year by the Irish Soccer Writers.

Dundalk were relegated for the first

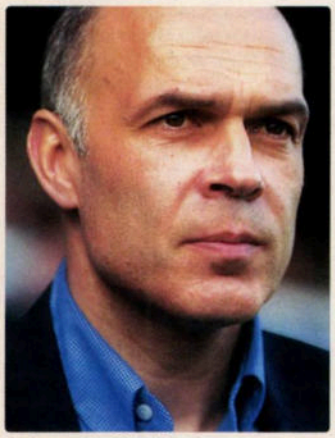
time and will be joined in the First Division by Bray Wanderers. Drogheda United and Galway United were promoted.

Sean Creedon

SWITZERLAND

Gross wanted again

COME home, Christian Gross, all is forgiven. That's the increasingly popular sentiment in Switzerland, where the coach's name is being linked with a string of likely vacancies this summer.



In demand...Christian Gross

Basle are one of the clubs most consistently linked with the former Tottenham man after sacking coach Guy Mathesz, the one-time Servette midfielder. Gross has been 'resting' since his departure from the London club in mid-season.

Meanwhile, Grasshopper, another of Gross's old clubs, staged a remarkable comeback to go top of the table, one point clear of long-time leaders Servette and Lausanne. Servette could have regained the advantage when they entertained Grasshopper in Geneva but they were held goalless.

Further disappointment followed when Servette went down 1-0 at home to Lausanne in the Cup semi-finals.

Keir Radnedge

AUSTRIA

Sturm near Double

STURM GRAZ headed towards the Double as they beat Linz ASK 4-2 on penalties in the Cup Final and managed to hang on to a one-point advantage in the League, with one game to play, by drawing 1-1 with Rapid Wien, their closest challengers.

Against Linz, skipper Ivica Vastic deflected a shot into his own goal in the 36th minute, but Mario Haas equalised on the hour after a brilliant solo dash.

Linz might have won with a golden goal in extra time but substitute Christian Stumpf was foiled by goalkeeper Kazimierz Sidorczuk – who also stopped shots in the shoot-out from Jurgen Kausz and Klaus Rohseano.

Keir Radnedge

PORTUGAL

Belenenses back where they belong

THE STORM over the departure of Graeme Souness from Benfica has attracted most of the attention in Portugal, but the game will go on without him. And no club will be looking forward to next season more keenly than newly-promoted Belenenses, who have had an up-and-down period in recent years.

They used to be regarded as the fourth club in the country, behind Benfica, Porto and Sporting – in alphabetical order! – but they have suffered from various problems.

Perhaps now that they are back in the top division, they will be able to revive memories of their glory days half a century ago, when they won the championship. That was in 1946 and they remain the only club apart from the Big Three to take the title.

Belenenses were founded in 1919 in the area of Lisbon named Rostelo, and after some time based in a different area they tried to buy their old ground back from the owners, Lisbon City Council.

There was an appeal for funds to build an imposing new stadium on the site and enable a return to Rostelo. But the appeal did not produce the necessary money, and the club's efforts to carry on resulted in bankruptcy.

The stadium has now been built, but Belenenses do not own it. They play there, but as tenants of the council, running on a fraction of the income of other clubs. We wish them well on their return.

Belenenses are accompanied back to the top flight by Gil Vicente, from the northern city of Barcelos. The promoted pair are aiming to follow Boavista, who amazed everybody by their strong showing which enabled them to enter the Champions League for the first time. They and their young manager, Jaime Pacheco, made the most of the chance provided when Benfica and Sporting faltered.

Finally, a word about FC Porto. At press time, they were almost certain to win the championship, for the fifth time in a row, and all credit to them.

Alberto da Silva

Solo scorer...Sturm Graz's Mario Haas

Pro-file Branko Strupar

Croat hot-shot firing the new Belgian champions

A HAPPY hunting ground, indeed. Branko Strupar, the front-man of new Belgian champions Genk, is just the latest in a long line of Croats who have piled up the goals in Belgium over the past decade.

Josip Weber of Cercle Bruges was the country's leading marksman for three consecutive years, 1992 to 1994, only to become a naturalised Belgian citizen and spectacularly fail to deliver at international level; Mario Stanic and Robert Spehar took the award in 1996 and 1997 respectively while with Club Brugge; and now it is Strupar's turn to head the charts. Last season he was top scorer with 22 and this term was again among the best finishers, with 18.

The Genk management can only look up to the heavens and give thanks for the day in May 1994 when they persuaded Strupar to quit Croat Second Division side Spansko Zagreb and become their house striker.

With 'Struppi' settling in almost immediately, Genk were promoted to the top flight within two years, and ever since it has been a case of onwards and upwards, with the Croat's predatory finishing ability proving to be the fuel of his club's recent emergence as a true force in Belgian football. He had to take a back seat when suspended from Genk's emphatic 4-0 victory over Club Brugge in the 1998 Belgian Cup Final. But Strupar was definitely behind the wheel when his team finished runners-up in the championship last season and clinched the 98-99 crown by winning at Harelbeke.

There are other reasons for the Croat to feel that all is right with the world at the moment. Earlier this year, he had the immense satisfaction of being voted Belgium's Footballer of the Year, while a couple of months ago his wife Sanja gave birth to their first child, a daughter named Dora.

"For both personal and playing reasons, it has been a fantastic year," smiles 29-year-old Strupar. "Someone up there must like me. I'm very happy and content off the pitch and I think it has a very positive effect when I go out to play for Genk.

"It's absolutely wonderful to be part of a team that has come from nowhere to become the champions. But it's no accident, it's no fairy story. I think Genk were the most consistent team in Belgium this season and played the most attractive football. We totally deserved this title.

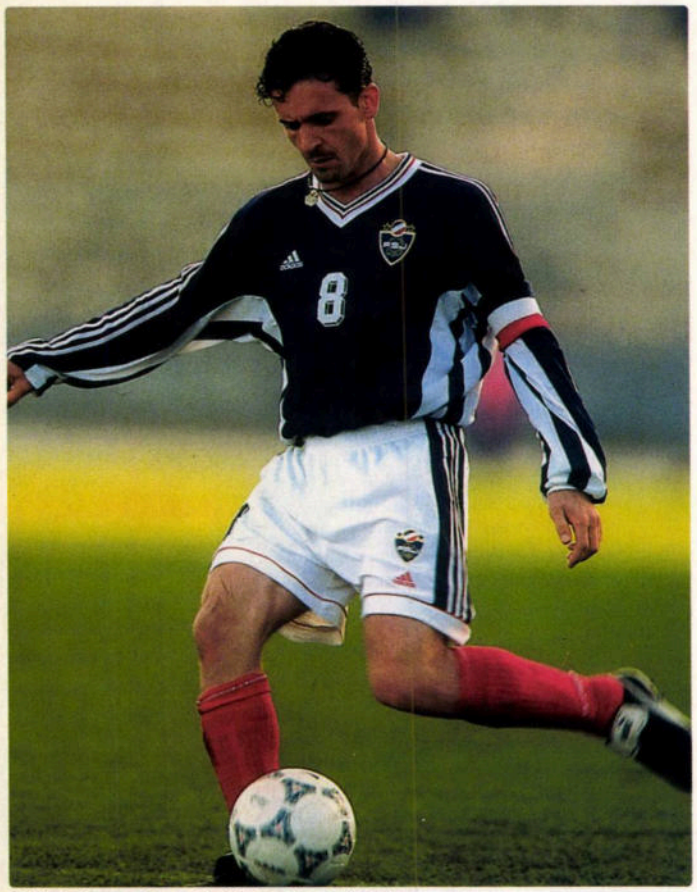
"Of course, a lot of people are now expecting us to fall apart. Our coach, Aime Anthuenis, is going to Anderlecht and some players will be sold [Strupar's attacking partner, the Guinean international Souleymane Oulare, is moving to Metz in France]. But I'm confident we can remain at the top in Belgium and do ourselves justice in the Champions League next season."

There is only one thing missing from Strupar's sporting portfolio – an international career. Until now, Croatia boss Miroslav Blazevic has ignored the solid claims of his prolific compatriot. What does a striker have to do?

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Genk (Blg)
Country Croatia
Born February 9, 1970, in Zagreb
Previous club Spansko Zagreb
Honours Belgian League 1999



Defiant stance...Yugoslavia's Predrag Mijatovic

The game goes on

YUGOSLAVIA

THE YUGOSLAVIA side that plays a Euro 2000 qualifier against the Republic of Ireland in Dublin on June 5 – if, indeed, that game is to go ahead – will exclusively comprise footballers who earn their living in NATO countries. It would be impossible for the Yugoslavs to field a team drawn from their domestic championship. The League stopped in March, and has now been officially declared void, and football does not, understandably, come high on the list of priorities for the people of Serbia.

Even so, Real Madrid's Yugoslavian forward Predrag Mijatovic insists that football does matter. "Sport has traditionally given our people a source of pride and achievement. That's why it was important that Serb players abroad made some public gestures – as we did in going on strike from our club matches. That's why it is also important that the national team not only carry on playing in the European Championship – as we intend to – but do well."

So far, apart from approving the Ireland match, UEFA has also given the go-ahead for the Slavs to play their 'home' fixture against Malta on June 9 in Salonika, Greece.

As far as the League is concerned, no champions have yet been named though Partizan Belgrade were leading at the time NATO bombing began and war was declared. Federation secretary Branko Bulatovic said: "We may declare a champion but first we must wait to see whether UEFA rules that our clubs may compete in European competitions next season."

Red Star were lying third when the League was suspended. Until last year they had never been out of the top two in their 54-year history but now the 1991 World Club Cup and Champions Cup winners are on the verge of collapse. The original break-up of Yugoslavia deprived Red Star of their traditional scouting grounds of Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia, while international sanctions denied the club access to the transfer fees they should have collected from the sales of a string of stars to western Europe.

But even money could not solve Red Star's other problems. Their stadium, for example, is close to the villa of the paramilitary leader Arkan, a possible target for NATO bombers. Within the stadium, Milena Pavlovic, curator of the club's museum, has packed away for safe-keeping many of the 660 trophies which should be on show. However, replicas of the Champions Cup and World Club Cup they won eight years ago remain on display, along with a photograph of the team – most of whom had been sold abroad within a year.

Keir Radnedge

GREECE

Presidents come to blows

THE VIP section of Athens' Olympic stadium was the centre of attention during the derby match between Athens rivals AEK and Panathinaikos.

The 20,000 fans did not see anything special on the pitch – both teams settled for a 0-0 draw – but they were treated to an unexpected boxing match in the VIP section.

Officials from both teams, including the presidents of the clubs, threw punches, and police were called to calm things down.

Two officials from AEK's owners, ENIC, were close to the action and later expressed concern about their company's investment "in such an irresponsible league".

The trouble began when veteran Panathinaikos player Mimis Domazos and AEK president Dimitris Melissanidis almost came to blows. At this point, Iakovos Melissanidis decided to send in his personal security guards to restore order and 'rescue' his brother. Fists, feet and chairs began flying in the subsequent fighting.

Panathinaikos president George Vardinoyiannis, who was seen throwing a punch or two, said his opposite number "can't come to our home with his bouncers and threaten us".

Sports Minister Andreas Fouras called for stricter security and limited access to the official stand.

Fans from Panathinaikos and Olympiakos also clashed, before the Greek Cup Final. Two supporters were taken to hospital with light injuries, and some vehicles were set ablaze.

Police arrested eight Olympiakos fans on suspicion that they had robbed a Panathinaikos supporter on a bus, burned him with cigarettes and cut his hair with a knife.

Olympiakos won the game 2-0 despite having defender Giorgios Amanitis sent off in the first half. Dimitris Mavrogenidis and Ghanaian Peter Ofori-Quaye scored in the second half. This was the club's 20th victory in the 56-year history of the competition.

Olympiakos president Socrates Kokkalis awarded a £10,000 bonus to each player, saying: "We proved that we are the best team in Greece. Our next job is to clinch the Double." They did just that, with a 3-2 home win against Iraklis Thessaloniki. AEK and Panathinaikos are fighting it out to become Greece's other representative in the Champions League.

Lou Economopoulos

MALTA

Valletta make it five

A FIFTH League title in a row, the sixth since 1990, and the 17th in the club's history. Those were the vital statistics after Valletta's comfortable 2-0 win over Naxxar Lions in their final Premier League fixture.

Full credit to the Valletta clan for the way they tackled the championship, especially in the latter stages when they were plagued by injuries to key players. The team still went from strength to strength, and managed to preserve their lead to the very end.

For the third year running the season developed into a two-club contest between Valletta and Birkirkara. Yet again 'Birki' failed to land that elusive first title, but at least they defeated the champions three times in the League – their only defeats.

St Patrick and Hamrun Spartans go down and will be replaced by Gozo and Zurrieq. Gozo, Malta's tiny sister island, have their own autonomous football leagues, but still managed to build a representative team who should prove to be an interesting innovation.

Domenico Aquilina

TURKEY

Trouble in Trabzon

GORDON MILNE has been dismissed as coach of Trabzonspor and the club's season fell into disarray after supporters set fire to part of the grandstand when a vital home match against Galatasaray ended in defeat.

Firemen were called to deal with the blaze while spectators hurled seats, coins and plastic bottles. One linesman was struck so often by missiles that the referee ordered him to go to the other side of the pitch, and the last few minutes were played with no assistant on one touchline and two on the other.

Trabzon have now been ordered to play their next two home matches behind closed gates.

Galatasaray's 3-0 win in the game virtually ensured them of a third successive title. They needed two points from their last two games to be certain, while Besiktas had to win their last three matches and hope Gala lost points.

Trabzon cannot finish higher than fourth – failure in this country – and it was certainly not good enough for Milne to keep his job.

Milne, a former Liverpool and England midfielder, enjoyed considerable

Sacked...Gordon Milne

success during an earlier spell in Turkey, with Besiktas, before returning to England to coach Leicester. He then went back to Turkey and was with Bursaspor before going to Trabzon.

The club's vice-president, Mehmet Ali Yilmaz, resigned after the Galatasaray game, but later changed his mind.

Real Madrid coach John Toshack, at Besiktas until recently, has persuaded his new club to buy Genclerbirligi's Geremi Njitap for £3.5million. The 21-year-old Cameroonian had cost Besiktas a mere £10,000.

Toshack also offered Fenerbahce £12m for Bosnian Elvir Baljic, but the bid was turned down.

Kalli Feldkamp, manager of Besiktas, has taken on a fellow German, Hans-Peter Briegel, as his assistant.

Vanspor, relegated last season, have been promoted. They are now coached by former international Ridvan Dilman, the former 'little devil' of Turkish soccer.

Hasan Cemali

DENMARK

AB's surprise for AaB

THE FAIRYTALE return to glory of one of Denmark's traditional clubs, AB of Copenhagen, continued when they won the Danish Cup Final in front of a 25,000 crowd at Parken.

Alex Nielsen and top scorer Chris Hermansen guided Akademisk Boldklub, a team originally founded by students, to a 2-1 triumph over Superliga leaders AaB Aalborg.

Every coach in northern Jutland had been hired to take AaB fans to Copenhagen for the Final, and there was a carnival atmosphere for the occasion. But Hermansen's goal sparked celebrations for AB, whose crowds usually hover around 3,000.

The man of the match, however, was AB's new international Rene Henriksen, who has emerged as a top-quality centre-back…at the age of 30.

Victory ensured a place in the UEFA Cup for AB, which was just as well because their title challenge suffered a huge blow three days later. They lost 3-1 at home to already-relegated B93 – the shock result of the season.

That left AB six points behind AaB with five matches to play. AaB, in contrast, responded to the disappointment of losing the Final by winning 3-1 at Aarhus Fremad, the other team who look set to go down.

Brondby remain in the title race, two points adrift, and must be hoping that top scorer Ebbe Sand can inspire them to a third title in a row before his £2million move to Schalke in the Bundesliga.

The fall and fall of Brian Laudrup's FC Copenhagen seems unending. More bad results have left them in severe danger of missing Europe and finishing as low as ninth, only two places above the relegation zone. The expectation created by Laudrup's return to Danish football has proved too much for the side to handle.

Jim Holden

NORWAY

Brann on fire again

EXPECTATIONS before a new football season are higher in Bergen than anywhere else in Norway. And just as in previous seasons, Brann and their players have been in the headlines from day one.

The name literally means 'Fire', and thunder and lightning are ingredients associated with this club for good and for bad!

The team lost their first two League games, and had to play with 10 men for most of the time in both. Then financial problems followed, which meant that the players had to agree a 10 per cent pay cut.

Late Dane…AB's Rene Henriksen

Despite that, they showed great fighting spirit and started to win matches. Captain Arne Vidar Moen led the team well, and strikers Mons Ivar Mjelde and Kjetil Lovvik found their scoring touch.

But when the team finally managed to put that nightmare behind them, the bad headlines appeared again.

The home match against Valerenga was marred by unacceptable behaviour by a group of supporters, and was followed by arrests at the away match against Stromsgodset. Even worse, one of the players, Stefan Paldan, was accused of having uttered a racist remark to Christer George, who retaliated and was sent off.

Four victories in a row then sent Brann flying up the table and on May 16, the eve of the country's national day, they drew a full house against favourites Molde. However, Andreas Lund's thunderbolt header gave Molde full points.

This performance helped to earn both Lund and defender Trond Andersen a national team call-up against Jamaica.

Just like last season, Molde have got the upper hand on Rosenborg in the League. Their win against Brann was their sixth victory in seven matches, in which Lund scored seven goals.

Other players who have been outstanding so far include Martin Andresen of Stabaek and Andreas Ottoson of Tromso.

Sigurd Odegaard

Pro-file John Carew

Lightning striker who's out on his own at Valerenga

JOHN CAREW burst on to the Norwegian football scene as a teenager in 1997, scoring 10 goals in 14 matches for Valerenga, who won the Norwegian Cup and gained promotion in the same season.

They knew they had signed a jewel when Carew chose to join them instead of Lillestrom, a club closer to his home town, Lorenskog.

"I decided to join Valerenga simply because I had always wanted to play for them," he says. "Their bohemian image always appealed to me, and their fans give tremendous support to the team."

They certainly do: 1997's double success brought Valerenga the highest total attendance of all four Oslo clubs – and the other three were in the top division.

Despite his height (193cm) and weight (88kg), Carew is very quick. His ability to take players on and create chances out of nothing has been of enormous value in the 4-5-1 system Valerenga normally play, Carew's role being that of the sole striker. "Even though this system means that I have to do a lot of running, it suits me fine, and in many ways I find it is easier to be the only one up front," he says. "I don't find myself getting mixed up in the runs being made by others."

'Little John' scored four of Valerenga's goals in 1997's 5-2 aggregate Cup semi-final win over Viking, and played in the Final victory over Stromsgodset which put the club into the 1998-99 Cup-winners Cup.

His two goals away to Rapid Bucharest in the first round were vital to the club's progress. Then, having won the first leg against Besiktas 1-0 at home, Carew and his team-mates were 3-0 down at half-time in Turkey. In the second half, however, Carew led the front line magnificently and Valerenga hit back by scoring three goals to qualify for the quarter-finals.

The fairytale ended there, against Chelsea, but Carew again showed his star potential, fighting on his own up front.

Bologna were close to getting his signature last winter, but after talks with his coach, Egil Olsen, Carew decided to stay at least one more season with Valerenga. "The desire to go abroad and play professional football is certainly there, but I'm still young and have lots of good years ahead of me," he says. "I'm ambitious, but patient as well."

Carew has struggled to find form this season and scored only once in his first six matches. But his talent cannot be denied and he should soon add to his six caps.

In Tore Andre Flo, Ole Solskjaer, Steffen Iversen and Carew, Norway coach Nils Semb has an excellent strike force for the years ahead.

Sigurd Odegaard

Fact file

Club Valerenga
Country Norway
Born September 5, 1979, in Lorenskog
International debut November 1998, v Egypt
International caps 6 (1 gl)
Honours Norwegian Cup 1997

Mr Reliable

Luzhnyi seems sure to succeed in England, says Oleg Zadernovsky

UKRAINE

MANY people said that he was going to leave his country 18 months ago. Just as many claim that he could stay at home and keep his place at the highest level for three or four more seasons. But now Oleh Luzhnyi is on the brink of quitting Ukraine, and Kyiv Dynamo, to play in England.

Luzhnyi will be missed, but there is no acrimony over the move. His club president, Grigory Surkis, says: "I made a promise to Oleh some time ago that in due course he could leave for the West, and we have been negotiating with clubs capable of giving him the lucrative financial terms he deserves. He has earned this reward because of his loyalty to his club for the past 10 years."

Luzhnyi was a prime target for other clubs once Kyiv went out of the Champions League, beaten in the semi-finals by Bayern Munich. Before then, he had seemed set to join Benfica, but their financial problems meant the deal fell through.

At that time, Surkis had said: "I would like to see Oleh in a Dynamo shirt for ever. I admire him so much. He is not only captain, but also an on-field coach for our younger players."

More recently, Liverpool, West Ham and Sheffield Wednesday were linked with him. Then Middlesbrough expressed an interest, followed by Newcastle.

But just as Luzhnyi had appeared to settle on a move to Tyneside, Arsenal stepped in to stake their claim.

Premiership prospect...Oleh Luzhnyi

At press time, the London club were the strong favourites to secure his signature, but wherever he goes, the fans will take to him. They will admire him for his bravery as well as for his skill.

Luzhnyi has great experience, from his early days with Larpaty Lyiv and Torpedo Lutsk up to the present. With Dynamo alone he has played 350 senior games, winning the championship in each of the past six seasons.

His international career began with the Soviet Union, for whom he appeared four times. "My debut was in a World Cup qualifying game against East Germany," he recalls. "We won 3-0, and it was the most emotional 90 minutes of my career." Luzhnyi has now won 27 caps for Ukraine.

Meanwhile, back at Dynamo, Surkis and coach Valerii Lobanovskyi are planning replacements for the definite departees, Luzhnyi and Andrii Shevchenko (Milan), and a probable mover, Serhii Rebrov. Already, Sergey Serebrenikov, a Russian, has been used more often than Rebrov in attack, and Serhii Ezerskyi has been given some outings in defence with the prospect of replacing Luzhnyi.

Although the title race is not yet over (Kyiv currently lead Shakhtar Donetsk by two points with 13 games to go), the bosses are willing to experiment ahead of the inevitable day when the Big Three are no longer available.

GEORGIA

Dual role for Boskamp

DUTCHMAN John Boskamp has taken on two new jobs in Georgia. He was appointed coach of Dinamo Tbilisi, taking over from Murtaz Kurtsilava, and a few days later became coach to the national squad as well.

His first order to his new players was to learn English "so that we can speak the same language".

"There are many talented players in Georgia, and my dream is to help them to qualify for the European Championship," he said.

Vladimir Gutsaev resigned as coach of the national team shortly before Boskamp's appointment.

Vladimir Kalinkovich

ALBANIA

Champions FK set a record

A CLOSE race for the championship ended with FK Tirana winning the title for the 18th time – a record. They had 61 points and beat off the challenge from the holders, Vllaznia Shkoder, who finished a point behind. Bylis Balsh maintained their surprisingly good form to take third place with 59 points.

Lufti Nuri, ambitious president of FK, rewarded his squad with a bonus of £3,500 each – a considerable sum in Albania – and said: "This is the beginning of a new era for the club."

He could be right, for FK have plenty of young talent for coach Suljeman Mema to work with. The two outstanding players – Devi Muka and Eldorado Merkoci – are both internationals at 21.

FK needed four points from their last two games to take the title, and Muka's goals proved vital. He scored near the end in the 1-0 victory over Vllaznia, and again in a 1-1 draw with Besa Kavaja.

There is a possible Double in the offing, for FK and Vllaznia meet again in the Cup Final.

Gezim Nushi

POLAND

Wisla cruise to title

WISLA KRAKOW won the Polish championship with five rounds remaining, beating GKS Belchatow 4-0 to secure their first title since 1978.

The club had the money to strengthen the team thanks to the support of a new cable factory sponsor and they began as favourites for the title since their squad includes nine national team players. Among them is Tomasz Frankowski, 24, who is the leading scorer in the First Division, with 19 goals.

Wisla's championship was the third domestic title in four years for coach Franciszek Smuda. He won the first two with Widzew Lodz in 1996 and 1997.

Smuda said: "I am so happy, however I know that we have got to repeat it next season to prove that we deserve this title."

Ironically, Wisla will not be able to take part in the qualifying rounds of the Champions League. They were banned for a year from European competition after a Wisla hooligan struck Parma's

Winning coach...Wisla's Smuda

IN BRIEF

Three in a row for Sparta

SPARTA PRAGUE landed their third successive title in the **CZECH REPUBLIC**, and their 26th in all, after old rivals Slavia were held 1-1 away by fourth-placed Olomouc.

That left Slavia seven points adrift with only two games to play. And to make matters even worse, Teplice – 1-0 away winners over Liberec – moved past them into second place.

Sparta wrapped up the title with a 2-0 win over Jablonec, with both goals from League top scorer Horst Siegl.

In **HUNGARY**, MTK long ago sewed up the title, leaving interest centred on qualification for next season's UEFA Cup. Ferencvaros seized temporary advantage with a 2-0 home win over Videoton. Defender Janos Matyus opened the scoring in the 74th minute and midfielder Akos Fuzi added a second five minutes from time.

MTK added to struggling Siofok's problems with a 1-0 win, thanks to a goal from Karoly Eros.

In **SLOVAKIA**, top-of-the-table nerves upset Slovan Bratislava when a home win over Trencin in front of their expectant fans was all they needed to start the title party.

Local rivals and closest pursuers Inter Bratislava had been held goalless away to Ruzomberok, so Slovan had the crown at their mercy. But after a shot-shy display, the

Dino Baggio on the head with a knife during the sides' UEFA Cup tie in Krakow last October.

Wisla have officially requested a relaxation of the decision, however vice-chairman Stanislaw Zietek admitted that "the club have only a little chance to get a favourable answer".

GKS Katowice, the favourite club of FA chairman Marian Dziurowicz, were the first team, of two, to be relegated. And prospects are no brighter off the field for Dziurowicz. FIFA has now forced the FA to hold an election for a new chairman on June 28. This could terminate the conflict between the FA and the Ministry of Sport, which has been dragging on since April last year.

The football weekly *Pilka Nozna* recently asked its readers who they would vote in as FA chairman. The winner, former Polish international Zbigniew Boniek, polled 74.5 per cent of the votes; Dziurowicz, who finished eighth, attracted a mere 0.7 per cent.

Dariusz Kurowski

Cake honour...Gheorghe Hagi

ROMANIA

Hagi takes the cake

GHEORGHE HAGI thrilled all his fans when he decided on one last national team appearance – in the potentially crucial European Championship qualifier against Hungary on June 5.

Romania have never beaten Hungary in 17 matches over 64 years, but are expected to make amends this time. Indeed, even the Hungarians expect it, judging by the reaction of Magyar coach Bertalan Bicskei, who said he "would make certain changes to compensate for the psychological impetus Hagi will bring to the match".

The response to Hagi's decision was remarkable. A Bucharest cake shop named a pastry after him in gratitude, while racehorse owner Ion Dulugeac presented the player with a three-year-old colt named Luciano Pavarotti.

The horse is worth about £3,500 – a significant sum in Romania – and will race domestically unless Hagi decides to go international. As for the cake, shop owner Ilie Cionca described his concoction as "very sweet".

Nor was that the end of Hagi-mania. Bogdan Lobont, Rapid Bucharest's international goalkeeper, volunteered to make Hagi's bed every morning at training camp!

In the League, Rapid Bucharest won 3-1 away to National Bucharest to open up a four-point lead over Dinamo. Ionel Ganea, the First Division's 26-goal top scorer, got the first.

Dinamo could only draw 0-0 in a bad-tempered clash with Steaua, their old rivals. Both sides had a man sent off as Dinamo failed to end an eight-year run without a victory in the tie.

Off the pitch, Dinamo's reputation is being dragged through both the mud and the courts. One former president, Petre Buduru, is awaiting trial by a military court on charges of forgery and illegal trading, while another, Vasile Ianul, has been sentenced to 12 years in jail for fraud.

Keir Radnedge

game ended in a disappointing 1-1 draw. Slovan went behind to a goal from Jozef Kulla, and did not pull level until Lubomir Meszaros struck midway through the second half.

In **CROATIA**, Croatia Zagreb, who appeared to be losing their grip in the wake of Mark Viduka's move to Celtic in mid-season, showed signs of revival when they won 2-0 away to Rijeka. Title rivals Hajduk Split beat Varteks 4-1, however, to stay level on points at the top.

Rijeka's own title challenge was under threat after only five minutes when Croatia opened the scoring with an Igor Biscan free-kick. Croatia goalkeeper Drazen Ladic was the key figure. He made some superb saves to keep Rijeka at bay, then missed a penalty at the other end, before Tomo Sokota tied up the points with a second goal in the 85th minute.

In **BULGARIA**, champions Litex Lovech kept their noses in front after winning 3-1 at home to Neftohimik Bourgas. Litex thus stayed two points clear of Levski Sofia, to the delight of coach Ferario Spaso, who said: "We are very close now."

AZERBAIJAN's Kepaz Ganja won the championship for the fourth time when they beat Dynamo 3-1. This put them six points ahead of Samkir with only one match left. In 1992 Kepaz became the first champions of independent Azerbaijan after the fragmentation of the Soviet Union. They took the title again in 1995 and 1998.

Pro-file Zaza Dzhanashia

Georgian striker with sights set on the West

THANKS to the half-dozen goals that powered Lokomotiv Moscow down the line to the semi-finals of this season's Cup-winners Cup, marksman Zaza Dzhanashia is attracting considerable interest from clubs all over western Europe.

If the 23-year-old Georgian's goals in Europe are anything to go by, he looks a player to be going places. Take the hat-trick in Lokomotiv's 3-0 quarter-final, first leg victory over Maccabi Haifa or the determined and assured way he scored in the 1-1 first-leg draw with Lazio in Moscow in the semi-finals, shaking off three Italian defenders before rounding Lazio keeper Luca Marchegiani and slotting home expertly on the turn.

Even those battle-hardened Serie A markers had to admit they had experienced a distinctly uncomfortable close encounter with Zaza.

"Our coach warned us before the tie that Dzhanashia was a good forward, but I think he probably understated his ability," admitted Lazio and Italy central defender Paolo Negro. "To say the least, he was a real handful, technically very good, with good pace and lots of fight and spirit.

"Apart from the goal, which he took very well, what was especially impressive about him was his love of a battle. He is very direct, never stopped coming at me for 90 minutes and even when I had won the ball, he was snapping away at me. I'm glad I don't have to face him every week."

Dzhanashia is widely thought of as the most talented forward to emerge from Georgia since highly-gifted Dinamo Tbilisi and USSR star Ramas Shengelia wove his magic some two decades ago. He first came to prominence with his scoring feats in the mid-1990s for the provincial Samtredia club. Normal service in the Georgian League involves Dinamo Tbilisi riding roughshod over all and sundry. But in the 1994-95 campaign, the Dzhanashia-inspired Samtredia clearly had other ideas, beating Dinamo home and away and only narrowly failing to outrun them in the title race.

Dzhanashia's contribution to such a fine season was 15 goals, and ever aware of emerging talent in the old Soviet republics, Lokomotiv Moscow moved in to sign him shortly afterwards. "I've had no reason at all to regret my time with Lokomotiv," says the striker. "We have a very competitive team and have proved it by reaching the semi-finals of the European Cup-winners Cup for the past two seasons. Italian League leaders Lazio could only manage two draws against us. We don't have to feel inferior to anyone.

"I'm happy at Lokomotiv, but at some point I would like to have the opportunity to see what I can do in a strong western European championship. Many of my international colleagues have gone to Holland, Germany and England. Why not me?"

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus)
Country Georgia
Born February 10, 1976, in Zestafoni
Previous club Samtredia
International debut June 1997, v Moldova
International caps 6 (3 goals)
Honours Russian Cup 1996, 1997

Codforsaken Vasco

The 'fish dish' club is anything but tasty, writes Brian Homewood

BRAZIL

NOTHING is going right at the moment for Vasco da Gama, last year's South American champions. From manager Antonio Lopes's failed hair implant to the loss of the Libertadores Cup crown on their own ground, the past few months have been pretty horrendous for all at the cod-flavoured club.

The year began amid an atmosphere of unbridled optimism. Vasco, who as champions sat out the first round of the Libertadores, were confident of retaining their title and having another stab at the World Club Cup, which they lost to Real Madrid in December.

Abrasive vice-president Eurico Miranda brashly proclaimed that his team had no serious competition in the Carioca (Rio state) championship, which they also won last year. And Lopes proudly turned up for pre-season training sprouting a new head of hair after going under the knife at a clinic in Rio.

Vasco, founded by the Portuguese colony and sometimes referred to as 'Dried Cod' after that country's national dish, began in storming style, winning the season-opening Rio-Sao Paulo tournament by beating Santos in both legs of the Final. But from there on it was all downhill.

First, Lopes began wearing a baseball cap as his scalp began to reject the implanted strands, and has not been seen in public without it since.

Then Vasco were beaten 2-1 by Flamengo, a result that allowed their bitter rivals to win the first stage of the Carioca championship. If Vasco are to retain this title, they now have to win the second stage and then beat Flamengo in the Final (the competition is divided into two stages, with the winners meeting in a play-off).

If Flamengo win both stages, however, they will take the title automatically.

Then Vasco lost their Libertadores crown after a 4-2 defeat at home to Big Phil Scolari's Palmeiras. Vasco had been favourites to go through after grinding out a 1-1 draw in the away leg, thanks mainly to magnificent goalkeeping by Carlos Germano.

Sadly for Vasco, Germano was injured in the defeat by Flamengo, while left-back Felipe, their star outfield player, was suspended after being sent off in the first game.

One week after that, Vasco were sent tumbling out of the Copa Brasil by Goias.

Then Luizao, the team's top scorer in the Carioca with 10 goals, was sacked following a row with Miranda over unpaid wages. At the same time, midfielder Pedrinho, another player with a bright future, made a premature comeback from a knee injury suffered last August, ruptured knee ligaments for a second time, and will be out for a further six months.

To cap it all...Vasco's decline has coincided with coach Antonio Lopes's bad hair days

Things have got so bad that there has been talk of Lopes ditching the so-called 'lucky' green shirt he wears during every Vasco game. The shirt, which never seems to have met an iron in its life, has had most of the colour washed out of it after two years of constant use, and, combined with the baseball cap and tracksuit trousers, has helped give Lopes a reputation as the worst-dressed man in the Brazilian game.

But Vasco's failings probably have more to do with fixture congestion than scruffy shirts. In trying to compete in the Carioca, Copa Brasil and Libertadores Cup at the same time, the team played 27 competitive games in the first three months of the season alone. Injuries piled up and fatigue quickly crept in.

Perhaps the club should have followed the example of Palmeiras, who are taking part in the Copa Brasil, Libertadores and Paulista championship. They simply gave up on the latter and fielded their reserve team. By press time, Palmeiras had reached the semi-finals of the Libertadores, having eliminated Corinthians on penalties in the quarter-finals, and were in the last eight of the Copa Brasil.

Palmeiras, who have won two Brazilian championships and three Paulistas during the 1990s, have never won the Libertadores, and are making this their clear priority. In Big Phil, who won the same title with Gremio in 1995, they have chosen the right man, even if his own behaviour and the rough style employed by his teams are both somewhat questionable.

The plethora of competitions continues to be a nightmare for the Brazilian supporter. The first half of the season features state championships (27 of them), Copa Brasil (a nationwide knockout cup), Libertadores, Rio-Sao Paulo tournament (featuring the biggest clubs from that region), Copa do Sul (biggest clubs from the south), Copa Nordeste (biggest clubs in the north-east), Copa do Norte (biggest clubs in the north), and finally Copa do Oeste (biggest clubs in the west).

Gremio won the Copa do Sul, beating Parana Club over a three-match Final, although this triumph was marred by the behaviour of club doctor Marcio Bolzani, who threw a bottle of water and several punches at the referee during the second match.

Cruzeiro, last year's runners-up in the Copa Brasil, Brazilian championship and Mercosur Cup, began the season by winning the Copa do Oeste, overcoming Vila Nova in another three-match Final.

Botafogo became the first team to reach the semi-finals of the Copa Brasil, while Internacional, Goias, Palmeiras, Flamengo, Juventude and Bahia were fighting for the other places.

In the Paulista championship, Sao Paulo and Portuguesa led Group 3 in the second stage while Santos and Corinthians were first and second in Group 4.

Sao Paulo, under Paraguay's World Cup manager, Paulo Cesar Carpegiani (see profile, right), remained unbeaten in 13 games, although their campaign was marred by urban violence.

A former director, Manoel Poco, 70, was killed when he was caught in crossfire between bandits and police on a main road leading into the city. Next day, midfielder Carlos Miguel was held up at gunpoint when he stopped at traffic lights near the club's training ground – in the middle of the afternoon. His assailants made off with documents and a mobile phone but not his car.

Team captain Rai, who returned last year after five years with Paris Saint-Germain, commented: "I thought the crime rate in Paris was bad, but nothing compares with Sao Paulo."

IN BRIEF

Barcelona in bother

ECUADOR's Barcelona, last year's Libertadores Cup finalists and the country's most popular club, could be relegated to the Second Division unless they can immediately pay £73,000 to settle a lawsuit brought by unpaid former coaches and players.

Barcelona have debts of £2million, though the FA might save them with a loan, for which they would have to put up the contracts of some players as guarantee.

Champions LDU Quito are top again, in front of El Nacional (unbeaten in 12 games until they lost 1-0 to bottom-placed Audaz Octubrino) and Emelec, who recently celebrated their 70th anniversary.

IN CHILE...champions Colo Colo have lost form and dropped to fourth place. Universidad Catolica's derby with Universidad de Chile ended with no goals, and after 12 games the latter lead jointly with Cobreloa. Newly-promoted Cobresal are third.

IN COLOMBIA...Sergio Galvan, an Argentinian playing for Once Caldas, became the first player to score five goals in a match for the second time in a surprise 6-0 defeat of current runners-up America. Galvan, in his third season with Caldas, also scored five against Cucuta in 1997.

Goalkeeper Rene Higuita scored

Top scorer of the 90s...Martin Palermo

ARGENTINA

River miss their big chance

BOCA JUNIORS beat River Plate 2-1 in the clash between Argentina's biggest rivals, which took on added importance this time because they were first and second respectively in the national closing championship.

River, trailing by five points, had to win to retain their title chance. But they failed to beat Boca – for the ninth successive time – even though the latter lost goalkeeper Abbomdancieri and midfielder Serna to injury and had defender Bermudez sent off, all in the first half.

This left Boca leading 61-55 on wins in their 164 League meetings in professional soccer. The match also was noteworthy for Martin Palermo's winner, his 50th goal for Boca, making him the decade's leading scorer with 83 goals.

Boca coach Carlos Bianchi beat the longest unbeaten record – 36 games (which includes his last 10 at Velez Sarsfield) – held by Juan Jose Pizutti with Racing Club since 1966-67. Boca have now gone 37 League games without defeat – two off Racing's record – but are not finding things easy due to a crop of injuries.

River Plate, who had reached the semi-finals of the Libertadores Cup at press time, fielded virtual reserve teams in some League matches, but still retain second spot. They are now six points behind and neck and neck with San Lorenzo, who looked like becoming Boca's chief challengers until beaten 3-2 at home by lowly Gimnasia y Esgrima de Jujuy.

Cesar Menotti's Independiente, after an indifferent start, won four straight games to move into fourth place.

At the other end, Ferro Carril Oeste set up a scoreless record of 875 minutes before surprisingly scoring twice in three minutes to draw 2-2 with River Plate.

Racing Club were given permission to play until the end of the championship by the judge in charge of their bankruptcy case, when a group of fans handed over £2million to cover expenses until June 30.

With four games in hand, Racing theoretically can win the title, but that is only wishful thinking. But they must pick up as many points as possible to improve their points average (over three seasons), calculated for relegation purposes.

The Santa Fe derby between Colon and Union was suspended with no score after a linesman was felled by a stone thrown from the stands. The thrower was identified as a Colon fan by a witness, so Colon lost the match and forfeited three more points. Later the 'witness' owned up to receiving £21,000 for his testimony, leaving the case in limbo.

Eric Weil

his 47th goal in Independiente Medellin's 4-2 victory over Independiente Santa Fe.

IN PARAGUAY...defending champions Olimpia won the first stage of the opening championship to take three bonus points into the eight-team final round.

Resistencia, promoted this season, were relegated again and released former international midfield idol Julio Cesar Romero, now 42, as well as his brother, Cipriano, who was coach.

Cerro Porteno's Brazilian striker, Gauchinho, was top scorer in the first stage with 10 goals, but his team finished only third.

IN PERU...two games between the three big clubs helped to shake up the situation at the top of the opening championship table. Sporting Cristal were out in front until they drew 1-1 with defending champions Universitario, and lost 3-2 to Alianza Lima. Now Universitario lead by three points with Alianza second and Sporting third.

IN URUGUAY...former FIFA president Joao Havelange, in Montevideo for Nacional's 100th anniversary (see club profile, page 48), advised them and Penarol to try to join the Argentinian or Brazilian championship.

Eric Weil

Interview Paulo Cesar Carpegiani

Tim Vickery on a possible future national coach for Brazil

BRAZIL's World Cup Final defeat last year meant that coach Mario Zagallo's time was up, and a few names were soon floated as possible replacements. One, fresh from his outstanding work with Paraguay's national squad, was Paulo Cesar Carpegiani, although many in the Brazilian media were unimpressed.

"I would assess his contribution to Brazilian football as zero," said Armando Nogueira, one of the country's most eminent journalists.

That seemed an extraordinarily harsh judgment on a man whose 16 caps for Brazil included appearances at the 1974 World Cup finals.

Nogueira's damning verdict reflected both Brazil's insularity and its short memory. Carpegiani's triumphs in his native land were too far in the past; his success in Paraguay was deemed irrelevant.

The Brazil job went to the less-experienced Wanderley Luxemburgo. Undismayed, Carpegiani waited before, at the start of this year, accepting an offer to coach Sao Paulo. His work with the ailing club immediately bore the stamp of true quality, and Nogueira is now one of his biggest fans.

With his new club, Carpegiani has shown the flexibility of his favoured three centre-back formation. But with better attacking players at his disposal he has Sao Paulo playing some wonderfully fluid football, full of variations and positional changes.

After the stultifying predictability of the 4-4-2 that most Brazilian sides employ, Carpegiani's methods have come as a welcome change.

"The Brazilian player isn't interested in tactics," he says. "And because he doesn't like paying attention to the tactical side of the game he has problems learning about it. He thinks that he can win the game whenever he wants. But what I'm always stressing is this: if the Brazilian player had the competence to do what the European can do in tactical terms, then, with our skill, Brazilian football would be unbeatable." His Sao Paulo squad seem to be learning the lesson, but Carpegiani points out that it is taking a big effort. "Anyway, I'm just starting my work here," he says.

The coach does not see a distinguished playing career as a job requirement. "There are no fixed rules for this," he says. "The job of a coach is very complex. You need to know how to command, to give coherent instructions, to pick the right players in the right positions. It might seem easy but it's not. It takes time to learn."

With nearly 20 years of top-class coaching experience under his belt, Carpegiani may well have rued the fact that the Brazil job did not come his way. But this calm and serious man is not one to let his guard slip. "No, I wasn't disappointed," he says. "The Brazil job is not an obsession for me. On the contrary, I'm very happy working for Sao Paulo. Of course, every coach here dreams about one day coaching the national team. But everything comes at the right time."

If there is any justice, then Carpegiani's time will come.

Fact file

Born February 7, 1949, in Erexim, Rio Grande do Sul
CAREER AS COACH
Club Sao Paulo
Honours Brazil national championship (twice)
Previous clubs Flamengo, El Nasser (Sau), Bangu, Nautico Internacional, Coritiba, Palmeiras, Cerro Porteno (Par), Barcelona (Ecu), Cerro Porteno (Par), Coritiba, Paraguay national team.
CAREER AS PLAYER
Clubs Internacional, Flamengo
International caps 16
Honours World Club Cup 1981; Libertadores Cup 1981; Brazilian national championship 1982; Rio state championship 1981; Paraguayan League 1994; King's Cup 1984

Top team...Nacional do a lap of honour after beating Nottingham Forest in the 1980 World Club Cup Final

Ton up!

Eric Weil reports on Nacional's great history

CLUB NACIONAL DE FOOTBALL of Montevideo, 100 years old on May 14, were the first, still-existing soccer club in South America to be formed entirely by local people. All previous sporting institutions had been organised by foreign communities, mainly British.

A group of Uruguayan students organised the fusion of two clubs – Uruguay Athletic Club and Montevideo Football Club – to create Nacional. Their colours – red, white and blue – were taken from the flag of General Jose Artigas, the hero of Uruguayan independence.

But when the first Uruguayan League was formed, in 1900, by four clubs representing the British (three) and German (one) communities, Nacional had their application turned down (for unexplained reasons). They applied for membership again the following year and were accepted, taking second place in their first season. A year later they won the first of many titles, and they have now won 36 championships; a total bettered only by their eternal Montevideo rivals, Penarol.

Nacional also entered their 100th year as champions, because last year they became the first team to win both the opening and closing First Division tournaments, thus becoming automatic title-holders without the need for a play-off. And they are well placed in this season's opening championship.

Nacional and Penarol are Uruguay's only two big clubs and they win most of the titles; they have also gained a number of international trophies. Nacional have won the Libertadores Cup three times, the All-American club championship (Inter-American Cup) twice and the World Club Cup three times, but the last of these international successes came more than 10 years ago.

In former times, Nacional (like Penarol) used to buy all the best Uruguayan players from the smaller clubs and stars from other countries. In recent years, the impoverished state of Uruguayan soccer has stopped them from buying and forced them to sell. Today, although still better off than the many smaller Uruguayan clubs, they owe players two months' salary and bonuses for the past five months.

Nacional have a 20,000-capacity stadium at Parque Central – where a lot of sport began in Uruguay – but they play important matches at the government-owned 74,000-capacity Centenario stadium, where the first World Cup Final was played in 1930. They also have a large training camp just outside Montevideo: Los Cespedes – named after two Uruguayan brothers, Carlos and Bolivar Cespedes, who were the leading scorers of the team in the early days.

But although Nacional are still proud of their home-grown origins, some of their outstanding players have been foreigners. Top of the list is Argentinian centre-forward Atilio Garcia, who was not recognised at home by Boca Juniors, but scored 464 goals for Nacional between 1938 and 1950. Quite a feat taking into account that most Uruguayan championships consisted of only 18 games. He also was Uruguay's top League scorer for eight seasons, from 1938 to 1945 – an achievement that is unlikely to be matched. Most important for Nacional fans, however, was the fact that he scored 34 goals in 26 matches against Penarol.

Other stars were Argentinian striker Rinaldo Martino, Brazilian goalkeeper Manga and much-travelled Argentinian international centre-forward Luis Artime. His goals helped Nacional win the 1971 Libertadores Cup and their first World Club Cup – he scored both in the 2-1 defeat of Greece's Panathinaikos. While with Nacional, Artime scored his 1,000th goal.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- 1902 – Nacional won all 20 games in taking their first League title.
- 1903 – Civil war broke out as the League was finishing, with Nacional and Penarol (then still called Central Uruguay Railway Cricket Club) sharing first place. The play-off date was fixed, but Nacional protested that many players had escaped to Argentina (partly to avoid being recruited by the army) and managed to get the game postponed. When it was played, the next year, Nacional took the field with only eight men, but just before the kick-off three of their escaped stars (who had by then been pardoned for evading recruitment) ran on. Nacional won 3-2, with goals by the Cespedes brothers.
- 1903 – Penarol protested that more Nacional players had been picked for the national team's annual game against Argentina and refused to release players. Thus Nacional went to play Argentina in Buenos Aires and beat them 3-2, also with goals by the Cespedes brothers.
- 1918 – Abdon Porte, an outstanding centre-half, was so dejected when dropped by Nacional after six seasons that he committed suicide in the centre of the Parque Central field.
- 1924 – The FA had no money to send a team, containing mostly Nacional players, to the Olympic Games and Nacional president Numa Pesquera helped to obtain the funds to pay for the trip. Uruguay won the gold medal and he was called 'the father of the victory'.
- 1925 – Nacional were the first South American club to tour Europe. It lasted 190 days, during which they played 38 games, winning 26 of them. They were watched by 700,000 people. Leading scorer, with 26 goals, was Hector Scarone, who scored over 300 in all for the club.
- 1933-34 – Arguably Nacional's best-ever team, called 'La Maquina' (the machine), won back-to-back titles playing outstanding soccer to capacity crowds. The usual line-up, under coach Ondino Viera, was: 'Flaco' Garcia, Nasazzi, Da Guia, Arsenio Fernandez, Faccio, Marcelino Fernandez, Labraga, Duhart, Petrone, Enrique Fernandez and Iturbide.
- 1939-43 – Nacional won five titles in a row, winning all their 20 games in 1941. During that time they also beat Penarol 10 times running, including a record 6-0 victory.
- 1988 – A great year for Nacional when they won the Libertadores Cup and World Club Cup for the third time. The captain was defender Hugo De Leon, another player intimately linked with Nacional. Today, he is their coach.

FACTS

Club Nacional De Football
Founded May 14, 1899
Address Avenida 8 de Octubre 2487, Montevideo, Uruguay
Colours Red, white and blue
Nickname Bolsos (because their jerseys had breast pockets – *bolsos* or *bolsillos* – which was unusual)
League championships (36) 1902, 1903, 1912, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1919, 1920, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1933, 1934, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1946, 1947, 1950, 1952, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1963, 1966, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1977, 1980, 1983, 1992, 1998
Libertadores Cup 1971, 1980, 1988
Inter-American Cup 1972, 1988
World Club Cup 1971, 1980, 1988

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Net profit...Toluca's Jose Cardozo has scored 45 goals in the last three seasons

Play-off system does not breed true champions

MEXICO

THERE have been 30 League competitions in Mexico since the play-off system was adopted, and on only 11 occasions has the championship been won by the team gaining the most points in the regular season. The figures for the last 25 of those 30 contests are even more revealing: only seven times has the title gone to the top points-winner of the regular campaign.

This indicates that the play-off system as used in this country is flawed, although the gate receipts indicate otherwise.

There are 18 teams in the Premier Division, which is divided into two groups of five and two of four. All the group winners qualify for the play-off quarter-finals, plus the three second-placed teams with the best points total. The other qualifier is decided by a two-leg meeting between the second-placed side with the fewest points and the third-placed side with the most. The problem lies in the fact that the regular season involves all the teams playing each other once, regardless of group.

The inequality of this system was exemplified by this year's Summer League. Guadalajara (group runners-up), Atletico Morelia (group runners-up) and Necaxa (group winners) all qualified for the play-offs having amassed fewer points than Santos Laguna, who finished only third in their group and were forced to meet Tecos UAG to decide who went through. Santos did make it, and the other qualifiers were Cruz Azul, America, Atlas and Toluca. The latter's Paraguayan forward, Jose Cardozo, is top scorer with 15 goals, taking his tally to 45 over three seasons – almost one per match.

Goals are on the increase. In the past two seasons the average per game has been 3.30 and 3.21 – and the last time the Mexican Premier League had an average above three per match was back in 1962.

This has pleased just about everybody except Puebla, who conceded far too many goals after manager Raul Cardenas bought five unknowns from Yugoslavia and Macedonia. They all failed to settle and the team never recovered from a bad start. They took only 13 points out of a possible 51, and were relegated for the first time.

Carlos Ramirez

UNITED STATES

Hunt's ground for hope

FLASHBACK to 30 years ago: New York Cosmos, not yet world famous, are to play a midweek home game against St Louis Stars at Yankee Stadium.

The weather is fine, the teams are fit, the fans – not a vast number – are milling around outside. There's around two hours to kick-off, but the gates are not yet open. Nor will they be. There will be no game tonight. It has been postponed, virtually at the last moment.

How come? Because the stadium is owned and run by the New York Yankees baseball team. Rain had fallen in the morning, and Yankees – who have a game the following day – are convinced that a soccer match will make a mess of their turf.

That incident revealed one of the biggest problems faced by pro soccer in the USA. Nowhere to play. Soccer always was an awkward tenant in a stadium owned by someone else, some other sport. It never could control its own destiny. Games could be called off at the whim of people who in all likelihood had never seen the game and had no idea what soccer players would do to a grass surface.

Thirty years later, the situation is not much different. All 12 teams in Major League Soccer are tenants in borrowed stadiums, sometimes owned by other pro sports, sometimes by municipal authorities...all except one. On May 15, Columbus Crew opened a new stadium, the first professional-quality, soccer-specific arena built in the USA.

The man behind it is the Columbus owner, Lamar Hunt, the businessman with the longest record of soccer involvement in the USA – he was an investor in the old North American Soccer League in 1967. In Columbus, he tried to get the local citizens to vote for a municipally-built and funded stadium, but that idea was twice voted down.

So Hunt has spent some £20million of his own money to build a 22,500-capacity stadium, only two miles from Columbus airport. Not the least amazing part of the story is that the stadium – based on Bayer Leverkusen's in Germany – was completed, from ground-breaking to opening, in nine months!

Apart from the fact that the Ohio club will never have their games called off for non-soccer reasons, they now enjoy important revenue sources not available to teams in borrowed stadiums: all the money from parking and concession stands now goes to the club. From the playing standpoint, the good news is that the field is a spacious 115 yards by 75. Getting suitably wide pitches in the USA never has been easy, because the American football stadiums so often used are built to accommodate a field only 56 yards wide.

Virtually all other MLS clubs play in facilities that are less than satisfactory. Some are simply too big, meaning banks of empty seats, which are not really disguised by the colourful tarpaulins draped over them. At Giants Stadium, home to New York/New Jersey MetroStars, the problem has been expensive: laying down a temporary grass field to cover the permanent artificial turf.

Hunt's initiative has shown that there is a solution. Admittedly, it won't be that easy, or that inexpensive elsewhere. Special factors applied in Columbus. But MLS commissioner Doug Logan is optimistic that other clubs are seriously considering building their own stadiums.

They will be further encouraged by the Crew's opening game: attendance of 24,741 (special seating was added to accommodate excess demand), some 8,500 season tickets sold – and a comfortable 2-0 win over New England Revolution.

Paul Gardner

Bribery bust-up

Why 'fix' a referee when you are 4-0 ahead? Mark Gleeson on the African club competitions

A BRIBERY scandal surrounding the defending CAF Cup holders, CS Sfaxien of Tunisia, dominated the second round of matches in the three African club competitions, overshadowing some surprise results and near misses as clubs battled to reach the last eight.

Two officials from Sfaxien, vice-president Ahmed Fakary Yaiche and committee member Fadhi Boussetta, were accused of offering a £680 bribe to the referee from Botswana, Kabelo Molepo, before the the second leg against Nkana FC of Zambia in Kitwe.

According to the official report, a trap was set by the referee and the match commissioner, Zimbabwe FA president Leo Mugabe, and police arrested the Tunisians as a first instalment was handed over.

Mugabe, also a member of CAF's executive committee, will now send a full report to CAF headquarters in Cairo, and Sfaxien could be in serious trouble. But why would they want to bribe the referee in the first place, when they had a 4-0 advantage from the first leg?

They lost the return game by a single goal but could have a much bigger headache if the referee's allegations are upheld.

In the Champions League, there was an upset win for Saint-Louisienne of Reunion and a narrow escape for the 1997 winners, Raja Casablanca of Morocco.

There was an even bigger surprise in the Cup-winners Cup – the elimination of Ghana's Asante Kotoko, one of the greats of past continental competition.

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Guiding light...Faouzi Rouissi kept Club Africain rolling in the Cup-winners Cup

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Holders ASEC Abidjan saw off Algeria's El Harrach with ease, winning 4-0 in the first leg and leading by a Venance Zeze goal in the return before Harrach claimed some respectability with a 2-1 home win.

Dynamos of Zimbabwe, who ASEC beat in last year's Final, are back into the mini-league competition after beating Vital'O of Burundi 3-0 on aggregate. Two of the goals came from Lloyd Mutasa as Dynamos won both away and at home for the second round in succession.

They are joined by previous winners Al Ahly of Egypt, Tunisia's Esperance and Morocco's Raja Casablanca, who sneaked past Djoliba of Mali. The sides drew 3-3 on aggregate but Raja won the penalty shoot-out 7-6 in Bamako.

The upset of the round was the elimination of much-fancied Mamelodi Sundowns of South Africa. They went down 5-3 to Saint-Louisienne from the French-controlled island of Reunion. Sundowns looked flat and disinterested in the first leg, at home, and were held 1-1, but led 2-0 in the return after 37 minutes before conceding four goals, the last three in five minutes.

Reunion have a team in the mini-league for the first time, while South Africa are absent for the first time in three years – a big blow for the French marketing agents who depend on television revenue from the Republic.

One place is still available in the last eight, with DC Motema Pembe of DR Congo and Shooting Stars of Nigeria still to play their tie.

CUP-WINNERS CUP: An impressive field of previous champions makes this potentially the most competitive field in years. But Asante Kotoko are out, having lost on penalties to Al Masry of Egypt in Port Said.

They won just 1-0 at home in the first leg and lost by the same score in the return, before Al Masry won 4-2 on penalties – their second straight triumph from spot-kicks in the competition.

Africa Sports of Ivory Coast had an easy triumph against Simba from Uganda, and Morocco's Royal Armed Forces also won home and away, against Nigeria's Wikki Tourists, who were making their first appearance in continental competition.

Tunisia's Club Africain had the most impressive win, against Dynamo Douala of Cameroon, who had to scrape the pennies together in order to fulfil the tie. Club Africain won 4-0 at home in the first leg, their front line led ably by veteran international Faouzi Rouissi, then won again for a 6-1 aggregate.

The goals flowed between Orlando Pirates and Maxaquene in the southern African derby, with Pirates going through 7-5 on aggregate. The South Africans were 3-1 up after the first leg in Johannesburg and scored in the first minute of the return, in Mozambique, only to be 4-2 down shortly after half-time. Goals from Sibusiso Zuma and Zambian international Denis Lota brought it back to 4-4 and put Pirates into the last eight.

Zambia's Power Dynamos got a walkover after the withdrawal of Burundi's Inter-Stars, who cited financial constraints for their inability to play. Inter-Stars originally proposed playing one match in Zambia to settle the tie, but the confederation was having none of that. Instead, it imposed a fine of £1,000 and a three-year ban from African competition, making Stars the first victims of CAF's new get-tough policy on errant clubs.

CAF CUP: The Sfaxien controversy means they are under investigation and might have to forfeit their quarter-final place. But the other Tunisian side in the competition, Etoile Sahel, went through 4-2 on aggregate against Uganda's Express Red Eagles. The vital goals came in the second leg, from Ridha Hammami and Mounir Boukadida.

Sahel will be joined by some tough opposition, notably Egypt's Zamalek, Wydad Casablanca of Morocco and US Medina, the only remaining team from Algeria in the three African competitions.

Canon Yaounde of Cameroon, another of the great names of African club football, scraped past the mediocre Ferroviario Beira of Mozambique by a single goal in the second leg.

Wydad were far from impressive in overcoming Diaraf Dakar 3-2 on aggregate, thanks to a goal from Imad Bencheikh five minutes from the end of the second leg, while Zamalek won 3-0 on aggregate against Stade Tamponnaise from Reunion.

The big upset came with the exit of popular Vita Club from the Democratic Republic of Congo, who lost to Etoile Filante of Burkina Faso.

Kwara United of Nigeria, held 1-1 by Saneamento Rangol of Angola, went through when their opponents withdrew from the return.

Saneamento now have to compensate Kwara for the loss of gate takings, pay a fine to CAF and sit out the next three years of African competition. Again a lack of money for travel was given as the reason for their failure to turn up.

Pro-file Shaun Bartlett

South African making European inroads

EIGHT GOALS in eight games for FC Zurich in this season's UEFA Cup marked a quick entry for South African international Shaun Bartlett on to the European scene.

The 26-year-old striker has long held ambitions of winning a contract in Europe but had been turned down by the likes of PSV Eindhoven on previous attempts at making a breakthrough.

The closest Bartlett got was a frustrating two years in the USA, where Major League Soccer had signed him after watching his devastating displays as a super sub in the 1996 African Nations Cup.

Now, finally, Bartlett has made his mark, helping unfashionable Zurich go as far as the third round in the European competition, where they pushed Roma all the way before finally bowing out.

For the player who hails from Cape Town, there is no turning back. "Although I signed a four-year contract with Zurich, I really want to stay for two seasons and then move on to a better league, say in Italy, England or Spain," he says.

"With the UEFA Cup goals, obviously there has already been some interest, and if I continue to do well I'm sure I'll get my chance."

Bartlett has had a bit of a hard act to follow in Zurich, taking over the pivotal role vacated by the Burundian sensation Shabani Nonda, the best player in Switzerland in the 1997-98 season before he moved to Rennes in France.

"When I didn't score in the first three or four games, people in Zurich started questioning why they had spent two million francs [£850,000] for a player who wasn't scoring. But once I got my first goal and then started banging them in, I think Nonda was quickly forgotten."

There is an air of quiet, steely determination to the athletic-looking Bartlett, whose early days in the pro ranks in South Africa saw him polished by former England Under-21 international and Ipswich Town striker Mich D'Avray.

It was under D'Avray at Cape Town Spurs that Bartlett flourished, his pace and accuracy helping his team win the League and Cup double in 1995 and earning himself the first of his 33 caps for Bafana Bafana.

Former South Africa coach Clive Barker took him in the squad to the 1996 Nations Cup finals, where Bartlett scored the brilliant semi-final goal against Ghana that put South Africa well and truly on their way to the title. In all there have been 12 goals for his country, a total bettered only by Phil Masinga, the former Leeds United striker. "The highlight for me, though, was the goal I scored in the World Cup finals," says Bartlett, who, in fact, got two – both against Saudi Arabia in Bordeaux at the end of a disappointing campaign for the country.

He now shares a healthy rivalry with Masinga and Benni McCarthy of Ajax for the two striking berths in the South African team. "I've always liked competition and it's good for our coach because he has more options," he says.

Already a hero back home, where Nelson Mandela came to his wedding, Bartlett's plan now is to conquer Europe. With his foot finally in the door, there is no reason why he can't.

Mark Gleeson

Fact file

Club FC Zurich (Swi)
Country South Africa
Born October 31, 1972
Previous clubs Cape Town Spurs, Colorado Rapids (USA), AmaZulu, New York/New Jersey MetroStars (USA)
International debut April 1995, v Lesotho
International caps 33 (12 gls)

Fast developer...Jubilo's Naohiro Takahara at the World Youth Cup

New-style Verdy cause a surprise

JAPAN

VERDY KAWASAKI surprised everybody by leading the J.League for much of the First Stage.

Having lost their major sponsor and most of their stars at the end of last season, Verdy seemed destined for a period of obscurity. Instead, the new spirit of modesty at the club – winners of the J.League in 1993 and 1994 – has started to pay big dividends in terms of teamwork and willingness to learn.

Under the partnership of coach Hideki Matsunaga and general manager Kunihide Lee, the team presents an interesting mixture of new talent and experience. The experience is represented above all by hard-working captain Tsuyoshi Kitazawa, former midfield dynamo of the national team.

There are two other internationals in the team, centre-forward Takuya Takagi and winger Takahiro Yamada.

It's the defence, however, that catches the eye and holds the key to Verdy's present success. At the heart of it are the stoppers Yuji Nakazawa, 21, and 22-year-old Atsushi Yoneyama.

Yoshiyuki Kobayashi, 21, is also playing a major part, and can be used either in a holding role in midfield or to support the attack.

The result is compact, selfless football which involves plenty of passing.

Kitazawa has been rewarded by being recalled to the national squad for the first time in nearly a year, and Nakazawa by being given his first chance in the Olympic squad.

Verdy slipped, however, when losing 3-0 at home to bottom club Kyoto Purple Sanga. "We lost those goals through mistakes," said Matsunaga, "but the bigger problem is our finishing."

That defeat dropped Verdy to third behind Jubilo Iwata and Shimizu S-Pulse. Jubilo now have a two-point lead with four games left, two more than both their nearest challengers, and are firm favourites to retain the First Stage title they won last year.

Jubilo have had a remarkable month, beating both S-Pulse 5-2 and Antlers 2-1 away in the League and winning the Asian Club Championship against Esteghlal, 2-1 in Tehran.

The 120,000 crowd for that game has been confirmed as the biggest in Asian football history, and included only an estimated 100 Jubilo supporters.

Jubilo have shown that if any team can keep their heads in such a hostile stadium, it is them. What's more, they have done it with an all-Japanese squad and a Japanese manager, Takashi Kuwabara. Their only foreign player, the Brazilian Adilson, has been out all season with a knee injury.

The club are looking ever more

OCEANIA

United go into finals on top

CASH-STRAPPED Sydney United were crowned minor premiers in **AUSTRALIA** when they defeated West Adelaide 3-1 in the concluding round of the Ericsson Cup's regular season. They finished one point clear of long-time leaders South Melbourne.

Along with the top two, Perth Glory, Marconi, Northern Spirit and Adelaide City also qualified for the finals.

City had to thank national team captain Alex Tobin for their place in the last six. He scored the 83rd-minute winner against Sydney Olympic, who needed only to draw to secure the final qualifying spot.

However, City's campaign was extended by only two weeks, since Perth beat them 2-1 on aggregate during the play-offs' opening phase.

Northern Spirit were the other early casualties, losing 2-1 to Marconi.

Rufer in charge at new club

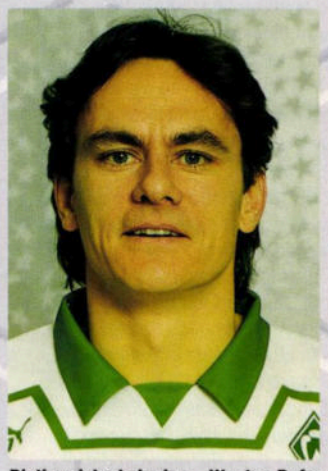
AT LAST! There is a fully professional soccer club in **NEW ZEALAND**, where the FA came into being as long ago as 1891.

Auckland Kings have been formed to participate in Australia's national league, the Ericsson Cup, and will make their debut when the new season starts in September.

The impact of the launch was maximised by the announcement that they had recruited Kiwi soccer's most distinguished product, Wynton Rufer, as player-coach.

Rufer, now 36, had an illustrious career with Werder Bremen and recently was elected Oceania Player of the Century.

Kings are expected to sign many of New Zealand's top players in the coming months, including several of the Central United team.



Distinguished signing...Wynton Rufer

Meanwhile, United are threatening to turn the North Island League into a one-club race, having won all their opening nine games.

Paul Moon

ASIA IN BRIEF

It's a flying start for Kuwait

KUWAIT made a remarkable start to their Group 2 qualifiers for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, holding neighbouring Oman to a 2-2 draw and beating Syria 2-1.

Both games were away, and this good beginning, coupled with victory in the Gulf Cup last October and the fact that strikers Bashar Abdullah (22) and Faraj Laheeb (20) are in good form, make Kuwait firm favourites to clinch the group.

Group 4 favourites **IRAN** struggled at home to dispose of Bahrain, finally winning 2-1.

In the **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**, Al Wahda hammered Al Shabab 4-1 in their last match to clinch the title, which 12 teams had contested over a 211-day season.

Al Wahda finished nine points ahead to take the title for the first time, and their striker from Senegal,

accomplished in all departments but special mention should be made of the rapid progress of 19-year-old striker Naohiro Takahara, who played for Japan in the recent World Youth Cup.

"It's been a hard schedule," says Kuwabara, "but the players have all done well. We're the challengers this year, after losing to Antlers in last year's championship Final, and we can't afford to play badly in any game." Jubilo's next challenge, assuming they take the First Stage, is the Asian Super Cup, against Al Ittihad of Saudi Arabia.

Spare a thought, though, for champions Kashima Antlers, who have suffered four defeats in their past six League games. Surely they will be back for the Second Stage.

Several big FIFA names, including Antonio Matarrese, David Will and Peter Velappan, visited South Korea and Japan in May to check on the preparations for World Cup 2002. In Seoul, the highlight was the visit to the 63,000-capacity Sangam Stadium now under construction in the western suburbs.

There were conflicting signals about whether North Korea still might be invited to participate as a co-host. Even so, South Korean FA president Chung Moon-joon, the main mover for North Korean involvement, spoke of plans to visit North Korea with Sepp Blatter in the autumn.

In Tokyo, Japan repeated the call for a second-round group stage (four groups of four) in 2002 instead of a knockout tournament involving the last 16. This would increase the total number of matches from 64 to 76, partly plugging the revenue gap caused by co-hosting.

Meanwhile, the inspection team seemed impressed by the 63,000-capacity Saitama stadium, which is a contender to stage the Final.

On ticketing, Velappan noted that about three million tickets should be available.

Mike Plastow & Michi Ishijima

INDIA

Bhutia stars in trophy success

BAICHUNG BHUTIA confirmed his position among India's leading footballers during the six-nation South Asian Football Federation's Gold Cup.

Bhutia was the main difference between India, the holders, and the others in all his four games. He deservedly won the titles of Player of the Final – scoring one of the goals in the 2-0 defeat of Bangladesh – and Player of the Tournament.

Maldives caused a surprise by beating Nepal in the best match of the tournament and then beating them again in the match to decide third place. Naresh Joshi scored a hat-trick as Nepal defeated Sri Lanka.

Results in the event, played over 10 days at Nehru Stadium in Margao, Goa, were:

Group A: India 0 Bangladesh 0; Bangladesh 4 Pakistan 0; India 2 Pakistan 0.
Group B: Sri Lanka 0 Maldives 0; Nepal 3 Sri Lanka 2; Maldives 3 Nepal 2.
Semi-finals: India 2 Maldives 1; Bangladesh 2 Nepal 1.
3rd-place match: Maldives 2 Nepal 0.
Final: India 2 Bangladesh 0.

G C Das

Al Boori Lah, was the League's top scorer with 28 goals.

Sharjah, winners of five championships and seven FA Cups, were relegated for the first time.

In **SAUDI ARABIA,** Al Ittihad of Jeddah won the championship only two weeks after claiming the 1998 Asian Cup-winners Cup.

They beat city rivals Al Ahly 1-0 in the decider, the goal coming in the 51st minute from 1994 World Cup striker Hamza Idriss Falatah.

Al Ittihad also won the FA Cup and the Gulf Cooperation Council's club competition earlier in the season.

In **LEBANON**, Al Ansar defeated their nearest challengers Safa 3-1 to claim the title for the 11th consecutive time, a world record, with one week to go.

The club are on the verge of recording the fifth League and Cup double in their history, after beating Safa 2-1 in the semi-final. They now face Homenmen, who knocked out Nejmeh on penalty kicks after a 2-2 draw.

Despite rumours that the Asian Cup may not be held in Lebanon next year, AFC officials confirmed that notable progress has been achieved on stadiums and that the country will host the competition.

An AFC delegation visited Tripoli and Sidon, and praised the efforts being made to build new grounds in both cities.

In **OMAN**, Dhofar claimed their seventh League title with one week to go, despite being held to a goalless draw away to Sour. This put them on 33 points, five ahead of Al Nasr.

In **BAHRAIN**, Al Muharraq clinched the title for a record 24th time, finishing 10 points ahead of Al Ahly.

In **SINGAPORE**, the Singapore Armed Forces FC (SAFFC) lead the table with 10 points.

Mohamed Chbaro & Azam Mahmood

Crossword

Mitre

Win a top-quality Mitre football

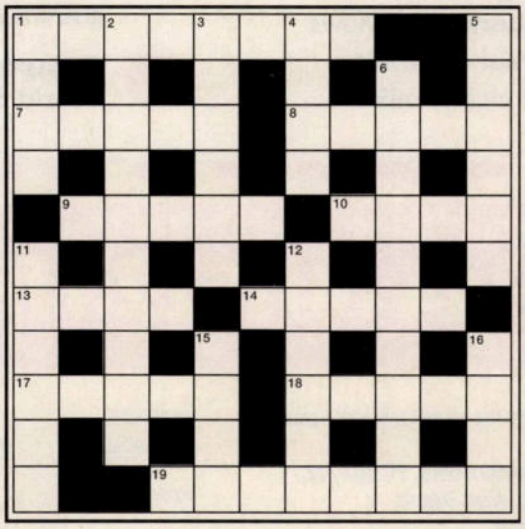
Mitre has kindly donated a top-quality football as first prize for this month's crossword. The first correct entry selected at random after July 2 will win the ball. Five runners-up will each win a copy of the book *Football Moods*, a photographic essay of the game.
SEND YOUR ENTRY TO: JULY CROSSWORD, *World Soccer*, King's Reach Tower, Stamford St, London SE1 9LS.

CLUES ACROSS
1 .....Karpin's fellow Russian midfielder at Celta Vigo (8)
7 .....German goalkeeper who joined Barnsley from Leverkusen in 1997 (5)
8 .....Ex-Liverpool boss briefly in joint control with Houllier (5)
9 .....Italian coach who left Borussia Dortmund in 1998 (5)
10 ...Portuguese forward currently serving Barcelona (4)
13 ...Africa's club champions, from Abidjan (4)
14 ...Milan's German wing-back, once of Bayern (5)
17 ...Stalwart Molde custodian who was with Wimbledon for a spell this season (5)
18 ...Aimar's predecessor as Tenerife coach (5)
19 ...Algerian-born, ex-Monaco midfielder at Bordeaux (8)

CLUES DOWN
1 .....Utrecht striker on his way to Rangers (4)
2 .....Milan-bound marksman of Kyiv Dynamo and Ukraine (10)
3.....Cagliari's Uruguayan midfielder (6)
4 .....PSV left-back capped by Belgium this season (4)
5 ....West Ham's Trinidad and Tobago goalkeeper (6)
6 .....Cash-strapped Argentinian outfit – winners of the 1967 World Club Cup (6,4)
11 ...26-year-old defender of Bayern Munich and Germany (6)
12 ...Argentina's national coach, successor to Passarella (6)
15 ...Ex-Schalke German first linked with Iran's top job last year (4)
16 ...Italian forward who joined Chelsea from Parma (4)

JUNE SOLUTION
ACROSS: 1 Diallo 3 Ivic 7 McManaman 9 Sane 10 Stanic 12 Tainio 13 Tuta 16 Gascoigne 17 Carr 18 Tigana
DOWN: 1 Dumas 2 Lens 4 Vanenburg 5 Ciric 6 Smith 8 Manninger 11 Ziese 12 Tomic 14 Arena 15 Toni

MAY WINNERS
1st Prize: Adas Zbyszewski, Poland.
Runners-up: Christine Devaux, Brussels; Neil Bradford, Fakenham, Norfolk; Andres Kishinevsky Rayo, Santiago, Chile; Dino McIntyre, Ohio, USA; Robert Dougherty, Clydebank, Scotland.



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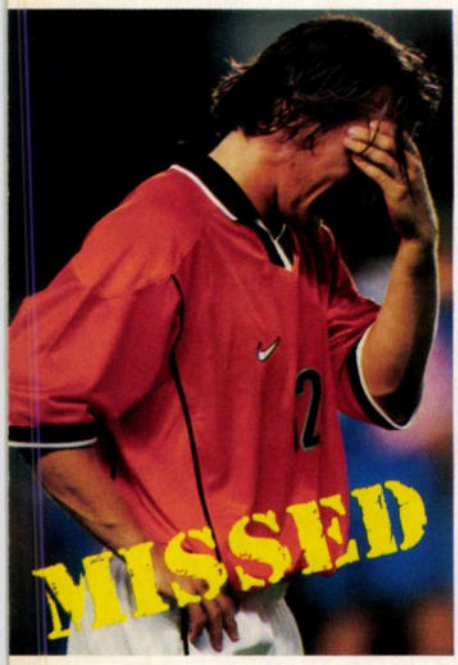

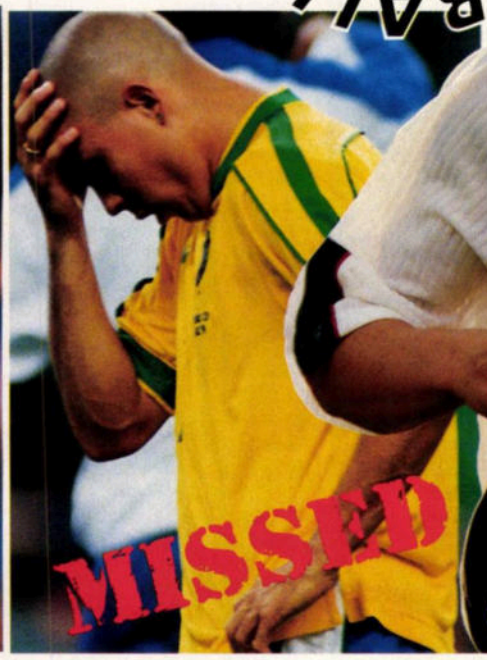

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World Service

Your complete guide to the month's stats and facts

INTERNATIONALS

Thursday, April 15

Apr 15 - Caracas - friendly
Venezuela 1 (J Garcia 48)
Colombia 1 (Morantes 37)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 22,000. **Ref:** Brand (Ven)
Venezuela: Sanhouse - Jimenez, Rey, Alvarez, McIntosh - Duno, Bidoglio, Tortolero, Urdaneta - J Garcia (Arango), Rondon (Gonzalez).
Colombia: Calero - Gonzalez, Portocarrero, Galarcio, Mazziri (Cortes) - Del Toro, Morantes (Hurtado), Mafla (Castillo), Bolano - Congo (Salcedo), Zambrano.

Thursday, April 22

Apr 22 - Luque - friendly
Paraguay 0
Colombia 2 (Congo 39, Morantes pen 46)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Gimenez (Par)
Paraguay: Tavarelli (Villar 46) - Rolon, Caniza, Espinola, Franco - Enciso, Paredes, C Gonzalez (Rivas 37), Centurion (Estigarribia 39) - Gomez (Saucedo 46), T Gonzalez.
Colombia: Calero - Gonzalez, Portocarrero, I Cordoba, Mazziri - Ramirez, Grisales, Bolanos, Morantes (Mafla 67) - Zambrano, Congo (Tellez 80).

Sunday, April 25

Apr 25 - Blantyre - Cosafa Castle Cup
Malawi 1 (Almeida og 32)
Angola 2 (Mendonca 76, Mabedi og 80)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000

Tuesday, April 27

Apr 27 - Belfast - friendly
Northern Ireland 1 (Parker og 90)
Canada 1 (Bircham 67)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 7,663. **Ref:** McCurry (Sco)
N Ireland: Taylor (Wright 46) - A Hughes, Horlock, Lomas, M Williams, Hunter, McCarthy (Hamill 58), Mulryne (Sonner 81), Dowie (Ferguson 73), Coote (McVeigh 73), Rowland.
Canada: Forrest - Clarke, Parker, Watson, De Vos, Xausa (Bircham 58), Stalteri (Kusch 65), Dasovic, Peschisolido, Bent, Brennan.

Wednesday, April 28

*Apr 28 - *Riga - European Championship qualifier*
Albania 0
Latvia 0
Att: 750. **Ref:** Romain (Blg)
Albania: Strakosha - Dzumba, Shulku, R Vata (Jupi 79), Fakaj, Kola, Bushi (Halili 88), Rrakli (Dalipi 82), Tare, Lala, Hadzi.
Latvia: Karavajevs - Stepanovs (Sharando 83), Blagonadezins, Lukasevics, Lobanovs, Ivanovs, Stolcers (Laizans 60), Miholaps (Dobrecovs 69), Rubins, Bleidelis, Bulders.
**Albania's home match was switched to Riga because of the Kosovo crisis.*

Apr 28 - Graz - European Championship qualifier
Austria 7 (Mayrleb 24, 53, Vastic 42, 44, 84, Amerhauser 71, Herzog pen 82)
San Marino 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 15,400. **Ref:** Vasaros (Gre)
Austria: Wohlfahrt - Cerny (Kitzbichler 71), Winklhofer (Rohseano 80), Schopp (Glieder 71), Feiersinger, Neukirchner, Mayrleb, Herzog, Vastic, Prosenik, Amerhauser.
San Marino: F Gasperoni - M Gennari (A Bacciocchi 46), Vanucci, Gobbi, Guerra, Della Balda, B Gasperoni (P A Manzaroli 15), R Muccioli, Montagna (N Bacciochi 78), Selva, Zonzini.

Apr 28 - Cochabamba - friendly
Bolivia 1 (Antelo pen 16)
Chile 1 (Pizarro 65)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Arana (Per)
Bolivia: Fernandez - Alvarez (Sergio Castillo), Sandy, Arana, Ivan Castillo - Justiniano (Liendo), Tufino, Cristaldo (Galindo), Gustavo Gutierrez (Raul Gutierrez) - Menacho (Coimbra), Antelo.
Chile: Ramirez - Contreras, Vargas, Fuentes, Aros (Santis) - Villaseca, Acuna, Valencia, Pizarro (Donoso) - Gonzalez (Villarroel), Neira (Reyes). *Sent off: Contreras.*

Apr 28 - Zagreb - friendly
Croatia 0
Italy 0
Att: 25,000. **Ref:** Dardenne (Ger)
Croatia: Ladic - Milinovic (N Kovac 46), Simic, Soldo, Juric, Stanic (Cvitanovic 68), Jarni, Asanovic (Jurcic 71), Vlaovic, Boksic (Maric 46), Rapaic (Tudor 68).
Italy: Buffon - Panucci (Pancaro 61), Nesta, Maldini, Negro, Albertini, Di Francesco (Conte 58), Ambrosini, Fuser, Inzaghi, (Totti 73), Vieri.

Apr 28 - Copenhagen - friendly
Denmark 1 (Sand 40)
South Africa 1 (Moshoeu 72)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 17,592. **Ref:** Temmink (Hol)
Denmark: Schmeichel - Colding, Henriksen, Helveg (Frederiksen 85), Heintze - Tofting, Gravesen (B Steen Nielsen 78), Tomasson (Goldbaek 60), Groenkjaer (Schjonberg 78), Jorgensen (Molnar 60) - Sand.
South Africa: Vonk - Fish, Issa, Radebe (Mokoena 90), Nyathi - Fortune (Moshoeu 58), Mngomeni, Mkhalela, Khumalo - Ndlanya (Mukansi 81), Masinga.

Apr 28 - Tbilisi - European Championship qualifier
Georgia 1 (Dzhanashia 58)
Norway 4 (Iversen 16, T A Flo 27, 38, Solskjaer 35)
HT: 0-4. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Puhl (Hun)
Georgia: Togonidze - Rekhviashvili (Kiknadze 88), Kaladze, Tsereteli, Shekiladze (Popkhadze 46), Nemsadze, Kobiashvili, Dzhamarauli, Ketsbaia (Demetradze 46), Didava, Dzhanashia.
Norway: Myhre - Hoftun, Bergdolmo, T Pedersen, Johnsen, Mykland, Solbakken, Iversen, Solskjaer (Strand 46), Rudi, T A Flo (Haaland 88).

Apr 28 - Bremen - friendly
Germany 0
Scotland 1 (Hutchison 65)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 27,000. **Ref:** Meier (Swi)
Germany: Lehmann - Nowotny, Matthaus, Worns, Strunz (Jancker 86), Hamann (Ballack 57), Jeremies (Ramelow 46), Heinrich, Neuville, Bierhoff (Kirsten 57), Heldt.
Scotland: Sullivan - Weir, Hendry (Ritchie 66), Boyd, Gemmill (Jess 57), Durrant (Winters 72), Lambert (Cameron 84), A Johnston (B O'Neil 86), Davidson (Whyte 79), Hutchison, Dodds.

Apr 28 - Athens - friendly
Greece 1 (Georgatos 57)
Switzerland 1 (Haas 20)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,000
Greece: Atmatzidis (Eleftheropoulos 46) - Navrogennidis, Kasapis, Ouzounidis, Anatolakis, Poursanidis (Zagorakis 46), Yannacopoulos (Zikos 80), Georgatos, Limberopoulos, Niniadis (Frantzeskos 46), Kyparissis (Constantinidis 31).
Switzerland: Brunner (Hubert 46) - Haas, Fournier, Hodel, Vogel, Wolf, Muller, Sesa (Wyss 84), Chapuisat (Rey 79), Sforza, Comisetti.

Apr 28 - Arnhem - friendly
Holland 1 (Van Nistelrooy 90)
Morocco 2 (Chippo 59, Bassir 69)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 24,000. **Ref:** Meese (Blg)
Holland: Van der Sar - Van Wonderen, Konterman, Van Gastel, Van Hintum - Seedorf (Mulder 80), Boussatta (Winter 65), Van Bronckhorst, Mols, Van Nistelrooy, Overmars (Van Vossen 46).
Morocco: Fouhami - Abrami, Rossi, Naybet, El Hadrioui, Ramzi (Sellami 90), El Khalej, Chippo (Chiba 76), El Hadji, Bassir (Zerouali 87), Hadda.

Apr 28 - Budapest - friendly
Hungary 1 (Hrutka 79)
England 1 (Shearer pen 22)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Frohlich (Ger)
Hungary: Kiraly - Hrutka, A Korsos (Toth 65), Matyus, Sebok, Halmai, Dombi, Dardai, Pisont (Somogyi 45), Illis, G Korsos, Toth (Herczeg 90).
England: Seaman - Brown (Gray 74), P Neville, Batty, Ferdinand (Carragher 62), Keown, Butt, Sherwood, Shearer, Phillips (Heskey 83), McManaman (Redknapp 85).

Apr 28 - Valletta - friendly
Malta 1 (Cutajar 44)
Iceland 2 (T Gudjonsson 36, Dadason 54)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 200. **Ref:** Tura
Malta: Barry (Muscat) - Grima, Azzopardi (Sixsmith), Vella (Turner), Said - Buttigieg, Cutajar (Mifsud), Carabott, Sultana (Buhagiar) - Camilleri (Holland), Zahra (Dimech).
Iceland: B Kristinsson (Gaufur) - Helgasson, Marteinsson, Sverrison (Kolvidsson), Hreidarsson - Gunnarsson, R Kristinsson, Gudjonsson - Sigurdsson, Dadasson (Helgusson), Gunnlaugsson (Danielsson).

Apr 28 - Pedro Juan Caballero - friendly
Paraguay 2 (Caceres 21, Caballero 65)
Mexico 1 (Arellano 90)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Elizondo (Arg)
Paraguay: Villar (Tavarelli) - Rolon, Maldonado, Caceres, Gavilan, Perez (Toledo), Cabrera, Enciso, Alvarenga (Garay), Caballero (Tomas Gonzalez), Santa Cruz.
Mexico: Rios - Zepeda (Lara), Joel Sanchez, Alvermaguer, Beltran (Carmona), Pardo, Rafael Garcia, Cabrera (Chavez), Luis Hernandez, Palencia (Arellano), Abundis.

Apr 28 - Warsaw - friendly
Poland 2 (Trzeciak 13, Wichniarek 49)
Czech Rep 1 (Lokvenc 79)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 8,000. **Ref:** Bikas (Gre)
Poland: Matysek - Lapinski, Zielinski (Wedzynski 86), Siadaczka (Kaliciak 83), Waldoch, Hajto (Klos 62), Iwan, Nowak (Bak 70), Michalski, Trzeciak (Frankowski 65), Wichniarek (Zurawski 70).
Czech Rep: Smicek - Votava (Vicek 40), Rada (Lokvenc 63), Nikl, Cizek (Polak 75), Nedved, Nemec (Horvath 54), Poborsky, Galasek, Koller (Hornak 89), Kuka.

Apr 28 - Dublin - friendly
Rep Ireland 2 (Kavannagh 75, Kennedy 77)
Sweden 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 29,300. **Ref:** Garibian (Fra)
Rep Ireland: Given - Carr, Staunton, McLoughlin, Cunningham, Breen (Babb 46), McAteer (Kavanagh 46), Kinsella (Kilbane 46), Quinn (Keane 79), Connolly (Cascarino 71), Kennedy (Duff 79).
Sweden: Kihlstedt - Kamark, P Andersson, Bjorklund (Jakobsson 46), Lucic, Schwarz, Mild (Alexandersson 46), D Andersson, Blomqvist, Larsson, J Pettersson (M Jonsson 82).

Apr 28 - Bucharest - friendly
Romania 1 (Ganea 47)
Belgium 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,500. **Ref:** Fasolas (Gre)
Romania: Stelea - Contra, Nanu, Nastase, Galca (Lincar 61), Filipescu, Florentin, D Munteanu (Ciobotariu 89), Moldovan (Ganea 46), Lupescu (Hildan 74), Vladoiu (Rosu 68).
Belgium: De Wilde - Deflandre, Vidovic, De Boeck, Goor, Baseggio (Kimoni 64), Staelens, Tanghe (Pierre 58), E Mpenza (Cavens 58), Walem, Boffin.

Apr 28 - Ljubljana - friendly
Slovenia 1 (Zahovic 61)
Finland 1 (Patelainen 22)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 1,500
Slovenia: Dabanovic - Galic, Bulajic, Milinovic - S Gajser, Mitrakovic, Karic, Acimovic, Zahovic - Florjancic, Cimerotic.
Finland: Niemi (Jaaskelainen 46) - Ylonen, Kinnunen (Saastamoinen 46), Hyypia, Lehkuoso - Rihilahti, Kautonen, Viljanen, Patelainen - Valakari, Kolkka.

Wednesday, May 5

May 5 - Sevilla - friendly
Spain 3 (Engonga 33, Hierro pen 48, Dani 84)
Croatia 1 (Suker 9)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 57,000. **Ref:** Collina (Ita)
Spain: Canizares - Salgado, Marcelino, Hierro (Paco Jemez 85), Aranzabal - Etxeberria, Guardiola (Helguera 66) - Engonga (Guti 46), Urzaiz (Munitis 46) - Dani, Luis Enrique (Mendieta 50).
Croatia: Ladic - Jarni, R Kovac, Tudor - Goran Juric, Krunoslav Jurcic, Rapajic (Maric 78), Simic - Boban - Vlaovic (Cvitanovic 73), Suker.

Thursday, May 6

May 6 - Port of Spain - friendly
Trinidad & Tobago 2 (Trotman 27, John 52)
South Africa 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Prendergast (Jam)
Trinidad & Tobago: Ince - King (Jemmot 81), Julien, David, Eve - Dwarika (Sam 89), Nakhid, Andrews (Mason 64), Elcock - John, Trotmann.
South Africa: Baloyi - Booth, Manzini (Sapula 46), F McCarthy, Mahlangu, Mngomeni, Khumalo, Masilela, Mbhele, Ndlanya (Mukansi 46), Mudau (Nomvete 70).

Saturday, May 8

May 8 - Windhoek - African Nations Cup qualifier
Namibia 0
Mali 0
Att: 10,000

Sunday, May 9

May 9 - Mbabane - Cosafa Castle Cup
Swaziland 3 (Nkambule pen 14, 40, Masina 63)
Mozambique 1 (Tomas pen 60)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Moeketsi (Les)
Swaziland: Sipho Dube - Shobane Dube, Mavuso, Ngubane, Mthethwa, Nkambule (Mkwanazi 78), Gamedze, Sibusiso Dlamini (Mdluli 86), Siza Dlamini, Masina, Maseko. *Sent off: Gamedze 85mins.*
Mozambique: Antoninho II - Tomas, Mane-Mane, Sergio Faife, Pinto Barros (Baute 69), Antoninho, Artur, Ze Bernardo, Jossias (Danito II 61), Paulito (Macamito 57), Arnaldo.

May 9 - Kingston - friendly
Jamaica 1 (Whitmore 37)
South Africa 1 (Modau 22)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 30,000

EUROPEAN U-21 CHAMPIONSHIP

Gp 9 - Apr 28 (Genk): Belgium 4 (Sonck 45, Caluwe pen 50, 52, Remacle 75) Bosnia 0.

OTHER INTERNATIONALS

Apr 27 (Meppen): Germany U-21 2 (Nehbauer 21, Reich pen 80) Scotland U-21 1 (Thompson 84).
(Budapest): Hungary U-21 2 (Rosa 3, 25) England U-21 2 (Mills 53, Beattie pen 56).
(Dublin): Rep Ireland U-21 0 Sweden U-21 3 (P Andersson 24, Wahlstedt 55, 90).

OTHER MATCH

Apr 28 - Barcelona - Barcelona centenary
Barcelona 2 (Luis Enrique 34, Cocu 63)
Brazil 2 (Ronaldo 29, Rivaldo 41)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 110,000
Barcelona: Hesp (Arnau 46) - Abelardo, Reiziger (Nadal 79), F De Boer - Guardiola (Xavi 46), Luis Enrique, Sergi, Cocu (Roger Garcia 63) - Zenden, Kluivert (Anderson 46), Luis Filipe Madeira.
Brazil: Rogerio - Ze Maria, Odvan, Scheidt, Roberto Carlos - Flavio Conceicao, Emerson, Amoroso (Giovanni 68) - Rivaldo - Romario, Ronaldo.

EURO 2000 QUALIFIERS

Group 1

05.09.98 .....Wales Italy 0-2
05.09.98 .....Belarus-Denmark 0-0
10.10.98 .....Italy-Switzerland 2-0
10.10.98 .....Denmark-Wales 1-2
14.10.98 .....Wales-Belarus 3-2
14.10.98 .....Switzerlan-Denmark 1-1
27.03.99 .....Belarus-Switzerland 0-1
27.03.99 .....Denmark-Italy 1-2
31.03.99 .....Switzerland-Wales 2-0
31.03.99 .....Italy-Belarus 1-1
05.06.99 .....Italy-Wales
05.06.99 .....Denmark-Belarus
09.06.99 .....Switzerland-Italy
09.06.99 .....Wales-Denmark
04.09.99 .....Belarus-Wales
04.09.99 .....Denmark-Switzerland
08.09.99 .....Switzerland-Belarus
08.09.99 .....Italy-Denmark
09.10.99 .....Wales-Switzerland
09.10.99 .....Belarus-Italy

GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	4	3	1	0	7	2	10
Switzerland	4	2	1	1	4	3	7
Wales	4	2	0	2	5	7	6
Belarus	4	0	2	2	3	5	2
Denmark	4	0	2	2	3	5	2

Group 2

05.09.98 .....Georgia-Albania 1-0
06.09.98 .....Greece-Slovenia 2-2
06.09.98 .....Norway-Latvia 1-3
10.10.98 .....Slovenia-Norway 1-2
10.10.98 .....Latvia-Georgia 1-0
14.10.98 .....Norway-Albania 2-2
14.10.98 .....Greece-Georgia 3-0
14.10.98 .....Slovenia-Latvia 1-0
18.11.98 .....Albania-Greece 0-0
27.03.99 .....Greece-Norway 0-2
27.03.99 .....Georgia-Slovenia 1-1
31.03.99 .....Slovenia-Albania .....Postp.
31.03.99 .....Latvia-Greece 0-0
28.04.99 .....Latvia-Albania 0-0
28.04.99 .....Georgia-Norway 1-4
30.05.99 .....Norway-Georgia
05.06.99 .....Albania-Norway
05.06.99 .....Georgia-Greece
05.06.99 .....Latvia-Slovenia
09.06.99 .....Albania-Slovenia
09.06.99 .....Greece-Latvia
18.08.99 .....Slovenia-Albania
04.09.99 .....Norway-Greece
04.09.99 .....Albania-Latvia
04.09.99 .....Slovenia-Georgia
08.09.99 .....Greece-Albania
08.09.99 .....Norway-Slovenia
08.09.99 .....Georgia-Latvia
09.10.99 .....Albania-Georgia
09.10.99 .....Slovenia-Greece
09.10.99 .....Latvia-Norway

GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norway	5	3	1	1	11	7	10
Latvia	5	2	2	1	4	2	8
Greece	5	1	3	1	5	4	6
Slovenia	4	1	2	1	5	5	5
Georgia	5	1	1	3	3	9	4
Albania	4	0	3	1	2	3	3

Group 3

05.09.98 .....Finland-Moldova 3-2
05.09.98 .....Turkey-Northern Ireland 3-0
10.10.98 .....Turkey-Germany 1-0
10.10.98 .....Northern Ireland-Finland 1-0
14.10.98 .....Moldova-Germany 1-3
14.10.98 .....Turkey-Finland 1-3
18.11.98 .....Northern Ireland-Moldova 2-2
27.03.99 .....Northern Ireland-Germany 0-3
27.03.99 .....Turkey-Moldova 2-0
31.03.99 .....Germany-Finland 2-0
31.03.99 .....Moldova-Northern Ireland 0-0
04.06.99 .....Germany-Moldova
05.06.99 .....Finland-Turkey
09.06.99 .....Moldova-Finland
04.09.99 .....Finland-Germany
04.09.99 .....Northern Ireland-Turkey
08.09.99 .....Germany-Northern Ireland
08.09.99 .....Moldova-Turkey
09.10.99 .....Germany-Turkey
09.10.99 .....Finland-Northern Ireland

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	4	3	0	1	8	2	9
Turkey	4	3	0	1	7	3	9
Finland	4	2	0	2	6	6	6
N Ireland	5	1	2	2	3	8	5
Moldova	5	0	2	3	5	10	2

Group 4

05.09.98 .....Armenia-Andorra 3-1
05.09.98 .....Ukraine-Russia 3-2
05.09.98 .....Iceland-France 1-1
10.10.98 .....Andorra-Ukraine 0-2
10.10.98 .....Russia-France 2-3
10.10.98 .....Armenia-Iceland 0-0
14.10.98 .....Ukraine-Armenia 2-0
14.10.98 .....France-Andorra 2-0
14.10.98 .....Iceland-Russia 1-0
27.03.99 .....Andorra-Iceland 0-2
27.03.99 .....France-Ukraine 0-0
27.03.99 .....Armenia-Russia 0-3
31.03.99 .....Ukraine-Iceland 1-1
31.03.99 .....Russia-Andorra 6-1
31.03.99 .....France-Armenia 2-0
05.06.99 .....Ukraine-Andorra
05.06.99 .....France-Russia
05.06.99 .....Iceland-Armenia
09.06.99 .....Andorra-France
09.06.99 .....Russia-Iceland
09.06.99 .....Armenia-Ukraine
04.09.99 .....Ukraine-France
04.09.99 .....Iceland-Andorra
04.09.99 .....Russia-Armenia
08.09.99 .....Andorra-Russia
08.09.99 .....Iceland-Ukraine
08.09.99 .....Armenia-France
09.10.99 .....France-Iceland
09.10.99 .....Russia-Ukraine
09.10.99 .....Andorra-Armenia

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	5	3	2	0	8	3	11
Ukraine	5	3	2	0	8	3	11
Iceland	5	2	3	0	5	2	9
Russia	5	2	0	3	13	8	6
Armenia	5	1	1	3	3	8	4
Andorra	5	0	0	5	2	15	0

Group 5

05.09.98.....Sweden-England 2-1
06.09.98.....Bulgaria-Poland 0-3
10.10.98.....Poland-Luxembourg 3-0
10.10.98.....England-Bulgaria 0-0
14.10.98.....Bulgaria-Sweden 0-1
14.10.98.....Luxembourg-England 0-3
27.03.99.....Sweden-Luxembourg 2-0
27.03.99.....England-Poland 3-1
31.03.99.....Luxembourg-Bulgaria 0-2
31.03.99.....Poland-Sweden 0-1
05.06.99.....Poland-Bulgaria
05.06.99.....England-Sweden
09.06.99.....Luxembourg-Poland
09.06.99.....Bulgaria-England
04.09.99.....Sweden-Bulgaria
04.09.99.....England-Luxembourg
08.09.99.....Luxembourg-Sweden
08.09.99.....Poland-England
09.10.99.....Sweden-Poland
10.10.99.....Bulgaria-Luxembourg

GROUP 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	4	4	0	0	6	1	12
England	4	2	1	1	7	3	7
Poland	4	2	0	2	7	4	6
Bulgaria	4	1	1	2	2	4	4
Luxembourg	4	0	0	4	0	10	0

Group 6

05.09.98 .....Austria-Israel 1-1
05.09.98 .....Cyprus-Spain 3-2
10.10.98 .....Cyprus-Austria 0-3
10.10.98 .....San Marino-Israel 0-5
14.10.98 .....San Marino-Austria 1-4
14.10.98 .....Israel-Spain 1-2
18.11.98 .....San Marino-Cyprus 0-1
10.02.99 .....Cyprus-San Marino 4-0
27.03.99 .....Spain-Austria 9-0
28.03.99 .....Israel-Cyprus 3-0
31.03.99 .....San Marino-Spain 0-6
28.04.99 .....Austria-San Marino 7-0
05.06.99 .....Spain-San Marino
06.06.99 .....Israel-Austria
04.09.99 .....Austria-Spain
05.09.99 .....Cyprus-Israel
08.09.99 .....Israel-San Marino
08.09.99 .....Spain-Cyprus
09.10.99 .....Spain-Israel
10.10.99 .....Austria-Cyprus

GROUP 6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Austria	5	3	1	1	15	11	10
Spain	4	3	0	1	19	4	9
Cyprus	5	3	0	2	8	8	9
Israel	4	2	1	1	10	3	7
San Marino	6	0	0	6	1	27	0

Group 7

02.09.98 .....Romania-Liechtenstein 7-0
05.09.98 .....Slovakia-Azerbaijan 3-0
06.09.98 .....Hungary-Portugal 0-1
10.10.98 .....Portugal-Romania 0-1
10.10.98 .....Liechtenstein-Slovakia 0-4
10.10.98 .....Azerbaijan-Hungary 0-4
14.10.98 .....Hungary-Romania 1-1
14.10.98 .....Slovakia-Portugal 0-3
14.10.98 .....Liechtenstein-Azerbaijan 2-1
26.03.99 .....Portugal-Azerbaijan 7-0
27.03.99 .....Romania-Slovakia 0-0
27.03.99 .....Hungary-Liechtenstein 5-0
31.03.99 .....Slovakia-Hungary 0-0
31.03.99 .....Liechtenstein-Portugal 0-5
31.03.99 .....Azerbaijan-Romania 0-1
05.06.99 .....Portugal-Slovakia
05.06.99 .....Romania-Hungary
05.06.99 .....Azerbaijan-Liechtenstein
09.06.99 .....Hungary-Slovakia
09.06.99 .....Portugal-Liechtenstein
09.06.99 .....Romania-Azerbaijan
03.09.99 .....Azerbaijan-Portugal
04.09.99 .....Slovakia-Romania
04.09.99 .....Liechtenstein-Hungary
08.09.99 .....Romania-Portugal
08.09.99 .....Slovakia-Liechtenstein
08.09.99 .....Hungary-Azerbaijan
09.10.99 .....Liechtenstein-Romania
09.10.99 .....Azerbaijan-Slovakia
10.10.99 .....Portugal-Hungary

GROUP 7

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portugal	5	4	0	1	18	2	12
Romania	5	3	2	0	10	1	11
Hungary	5	2	2	1	11	4	8
Slovakia	5	2	2	1	7	3	8
Liechtenstein	5	1	0	4	2	22	3
Azerbaijan	5	0	0	5	1	17	0

Group 8

05.09.98 .....Rep Ireland-Croatia 2-0
06.09.98 .....Macedonia-Malta 4-0
10.10.98 .....Malta-Croatia 1-4
14.10.98 .....Rep Ireland-Malta 5-0
14.10.98 .....Croatia-Macedonia 3-2
18.11.98 .....Malta-Macedonia 1-2
18.11.98 .....Yugoslavia-Rep Ireland 1-0
10.02.98 .....Malta-Yugoslavia 0-3
27.03.99 .....Macedonia-Rep Ireland .....Postp.
27.03.99 .....Yugoslavia-Croatia .....Postp.
31.03.99 .....Croatia-Malta .....Postp.
31.03.99 .....Yugoslavia-Macedonia .....Postp.
05.06.99 .....Macedonia-Croatia
05.06.99 .....Rep Ireland-Yugoslavia
09.06.99 .....Rep Ireland-Macedonia
09.06.99 .....Yugoslavia-Malta
18.08.99 .....Yugoslavia-Croatia
04.09.99 .....Croatia-Rep Ireland
04.09.99 .....Yugoslavia-Macedonia
08.09.99 .....Malta-Rep Ireland
08.09.99 .....Macedonia-Yugoslavia
09.10.99 .....Macedonia-Rep Ireland
10.10.99 .....Croatia-Yugoslavia
TBA.....Croatia-Malta

GROUP 8

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rep of Ireland	3	2	0	1	7	1	6
Macedonia	3	2	0	1	8	4	6
Yugoslavia	2	2	0	0	4	0	6
Croatia	3	2	0	1	7	5	6
Malta	5	0	0	5	2	18	0

Group 9

04.06.98 .....Estonia-Faroe Islands 5-0
19.08.98 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Faroe Is 1-0
05.09.98 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina Estonia 1-1
05.09.98 .....Lithuania-Scotland 0-0
06.09.98 .....Faroe Islands-Czech Republic 0-1
10.10.98 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Czech Rep 1-3
10.10.98 .....Lithuania-Faroe Islands 0-0
10.10.98 .....Scotland-Estonia 3-2
14.10.98 .....Lithuania-Bosnia-Herzegovina 4-2
14.10.98 .....Scotland-Faroe Islands 2-1
14.10.98 .....Czech Republic-Estonia 4-1
27.03.99 .....Czech Republic-Lithuania 2-0
27.03.99 .....Scotland-Bosnia-Herzegovina .....Postp.
31.03.99 .....Lithuania-Estonia 1-2
31.03.99 .....Scotland-Czech Republic 1-2
05.06.99 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Lithuania
05.06.99 .....Estonia-Czech Republic
05.06.99 .....Faroe Islands-Scotland
09.06.99 .....Estonia-Lithuania
09.06.99 .....Faroe Islands-Bosnia-Herzegovina
09.06.99 .....Czech Republic-Scotland
04.09.99 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Scotland
04.09.99 .....Faroe Islands-Estonia
04.09.99 .....Lithuania-Czech Republic
08.09.99 .....Czech Republic-Bosnia-Herzegovina
08.09.99 .....Faroe Islands-Lithuania
08.09.99 .....Estonia-Scotland
09.10.99 .....Estonia-Bosnia-Herzegovina
09.10.99 .....Czech Republic-Faroe Islands
09.10.99 .....Scotland-Lithuania
TBA.....Scotland-Bosnia-Herzegovina

GROUP 9

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Rep	5	5	0	0	12	3	15
Estonia	5	2	1	2	11	9	7
Scotland	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
Lithuania	5	1	2	2	5	6	5
Bosnia-Herz	4	1	1	2	5	8	4
Faroe Islands	5	0	1	4	1	9	1

EUROPE

AUSTRIA

Friday, April 23

Linz ASK 1 (Kauz 74)
Sturm Graz 2 (Martens 66, Vastic 90) Att: 6,000

Saturday, April 24

Austria Wien 3 (Wagner pen 45, Mayrleb 51, 64)
SV Ried 0 Att: 6,000

Grazer AK 0
Rapid Wien 1 (Adzic 7) Att: 9,000

Lustenau 0
Salzburg 0 Att: 9,000

FC Tirol 4 (Barisic 50, Gilewicz 62, 80, 90)
Vorwarts Steyr 0 Att: 2,000

Saturday, May 1

Grazer AK 2 (Vukovic 78, Lipa 87)
Linz ASK 1 (Rohseano 24) Att: 5,000

Rapid Wien 1 (Freund 18)
FC Tirol 1 (Kirchler 4) Att: 10,000

SV Ried 0
Sturm Graz 3 (Prilasnig 15, Vastic 21, 83) Att: 5,000

Salzburg 3 (Koejoe 60, Glieder 83, Bradaric 90)
Austria Wien 0 Att:11,000

Vorwarts Steyr 2 (Grubor 45, Lobe 68)
Lustenau 0 Att: 2,000

Friday, May 7

FC Tirol 1 (Baur pen 89)
Grazer AK 0 Att: 3,000

Saturday, May 8

Austria Wien 4 (Leitner 29, Darazs 31, Ernstsson 62, Plassnegger 70)
Vorwarts Steyr 1 (Datoru 7) Att: 4,000

Linz ASK 6 (Milinovic 14, 56, Stumpf 21, Tangen 40, Dadi 43, Pichorner 90)
SV Ried 1 (Angerschmid 6) Att: 5,000

Lustenau 2 (Regtop 51, Butrej 83)
Rapid Wien 0 Att: 7,000

Sturm Graz 1 (Popovic 41)
Salzburg 2 (Szewczyk 66, Sabitzer 82) Att: 12,000

Tuesday, May 11

Grazer AK 2 (Lipa 73, Kulovits 90)
Lustenau 0 Att: 6,000

Rapid Wien 0
Austria Wien 0 Att: 14,000

Salzburg 0
SV Ried 0 Att: 7,000

FC Tirol 4 (Gilewicz 16, Marasek pen 45, Anfang 51, Kirchler 90)
Linz ASK 0 Att: 3,000

Vorwarts Steyr 1 (Woldeab 90)
Sturm Graz 4 (Mahlich 37, Prilasnig 43, Schupp 53, Haas 66) Att: 3,000

Friday, May 14

Austria Wien 0
Grazer AK 3 (Ramusch 30, Akwuegbu 54, Radovic 90) Att: 4,000

Saturday, May 15

Linz ASK 3 (Lichtenwagner 23, 29, Dadi 36)
Salzburg 2 (Glieder 35, 45) Att: 7,000

Lustenau 0
FC Tirol 3 (Barisic 39, Scharrer 46, Beneker og 66) Att: 6,000

SV Ried 1 (Rothbauer 24)
Vorwarts Steyr 0 Att: 3,000

Sturm Graz 1 (Schopp 51)
Rapid Wien 1 (Wimmer 11) Att: 15,400

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sturm Graz	34	21	4	9	67	31	67
Rapid Wien	34	18	12	4	49	25	66
Grazer AK	34	19	5	10	43	27	62
Salzburg	34	14	11	9	52	39	53
FC Tirol	34	14	10	10	45	37	52
Linz ASK	34	15	6	13	50	44	51
Austria Wien	34	12	11	11	38	39	47
SV Ried	34	8	8	18	25	44	32
Lustenau	34	4	11	19	23	58	22
Vorwarts Steyr	34	3	6	25	28	76	12

AUSTRIAN CUP – SEMI-FINALS

May 5: Rapid Wien 0 Linz ASK 2; Sturm Graz 5 SV Ried 0.

BELGIUM

Saturday, April 24

Anderlecht 3 (Van Diemen 13, Anastasiou 30, Zetterberg 63)
Ostende 0 Att: 19,478

Ekeren 0
Genk 2 (Hendrikx 77, Hasi 90) Att: 8,000

Lokeren 6 (Vonasek 14, Zere 36, Boeka-Lisasi 49, Koller 59, 68, 73)
Eendracht Aalst 2 (Meyssen 31, Cosimo 58) Att: 3,700

Lommel 3 (Remacle og 4, Eshun 67, Dekelver 90)
Standard 0 Att: 6,000

Mouscron 1 (Ban 88)
Beveren 0 Att: 7,500

St Truiden 1 (Fiers 79)
Gent 0 Att: 7,000

Westerlo 1 (Janssen 81)
Charleroi 0 Att: 3,000

Sunday, April 25

Club Brugge 3 (Verheyen 6, Jankauskas 36, 82)
Kortrijk 0 Att: 11,500

Harelbeke 3 (Wostijn 2, 30, Visser 85)
Lierse 1 (Van Meir 21) Att: 4,500

Friday, April 30

Charleroi 1 (D Brogno 49)
Club Brugge 2 (Lembi 60, Verheyen 82) Att: 6,000

Saturday, May 1

Beveren 1 (Bonetto 37)
Westerlo 0 Att: 3,400

Gent 2 (C Roussel 2, Nielsen 46)
Lommel 2 (Dekelver 4, 76) Att: 5,000

Lierse 2 (Van Meir pen 78, Huysmans 83)
Lokeren 3 (Vanasek 16, Boeka-Lisasi 41, 49) Att: 7,000

Ostende 1 (Cuffez 11)
Harelbeke 0 Att: 1,500

Sunday, May 2

Eendracht Aalst 1 (De Vleeschauwer og 40)
Mouscron 4 (Tanghe 20, 32, 83, Pierre 50) Att: 4,500

Genk 4 (T Gudjonsson 6, Origi 32, 77, Strupar pen 45)
St Truiden 1 (Teppers 36) Att: 16,900

Kortrijk 1 (Joly 67)
Ekeren 2 (Severeyns 37, Bartholomeeussen 89) Att: 3,000

Standard 0
Anderlecht 6 (Scifo 2, Baseggio 29, Radzinski 34, 48, 64, Iachtchouck 35) Att: 30,000

Wednesday, May 5

Anderlecht 4 (Radzinski 3, 38, 51, Anastasiou 90)
Gent 0 Att: 23,925

Club Brugge 3 (Anic 7, Lembi 45, Ilic 53)
Beveren 1 (Ma. Zewlakow 77) Att: 10,000

Ekeren 2 (Severeyns 7, Karagiannis 13)
Charleroi 0 Att: 1,500

Harelbeke 1 (Diatel 81)
Standard 1 (E Mpenza 78) Att: 4,000

Lierse 3 (Van De Weyer 10, Cavens 30, 56)
Eendracht Aalst 1 (D Cooreman 57) Att: 5,000

Lokeren 1 (Koller 30)
Ostende 2 (Smits 23, Kabemba 87) Att: 2,000

Lommel 0
Genk 3 (Strupar 1, Hendrikx 44, 77) Att: 13,000

Westerlo 1 (Ferreira 86)
Mouscron 1 (Tanghe 1) Att: 3,000

Saturday, May 8

Westerlo 1 (Mitrovic 26)
Eendracht Aalst 1 (Thiebaut 86) Att: 3,000

Sunday, May 9

Beveren 2 (Ma. Zewlakow 37, Smid pen 89)
Ekeren 1 (Severeyns 50) Att: 3,500

Charleroi 2 (D Brogno pen 20, 73)
St Truiden 1 (Rudonja 30) Att: 2,000

Genk 2 (Strupar pen 72, pen 84)
Anderlecht 5 (Iachtchouck 16, Stoica 54, Anastasiou 58, Radzinski 65, 81) Att: 16,900

Gent 0
Harlebeke 0 Att: 3,500

Kortrijk 4 (Prunier 45, Heymans 70, Demkine 86, F Staelens 89)
Lommel 1 (Eshun 22) Att: 3,300

Mouscron 2 (Ban 36, 80)
Club Brugge 0 Att: 9,000

Ostende 0
Lierse 6 (Haagdoren 15, 85, Huysmans 57, Somers 68, Van De Weyer 71, Spiteri 77) Att: 3,000

Standard 2 (Lukunku 53, Haeldermans 74)
Lokeren 4 (Boeka-Lisasi 29, 44, 70, Budka 34) Att: 6,000

Sunday, May 16

Anderlecht 3 (Van Diemen 32, Scifo 51, Zetterberg pen 53)
Kortrijk 1 (Demkine 31) Att: 27,509

Club Brugge 5 (Ilic 7, Ekakia 43, Anic 55, Claessens 65, Van Der Elst 72)
Westerlo 3 (Mitrovic 48, Siljanoski 70, Thoelen 79) Att: 18,000

Eendracht Aalst 4 (D Cooreman 70, Van Hoyweghen 74, De Oliveira 80, Cosimo 87)
Ostende 0 Att: 3,000

Ekeren 1 (Severeyns 85)
Mouscron 1 (Vidovic pen 9) Att: 4,000

Harelbeke 1 (A Kubik 83)
Genk 2 (Oulare 31, T Gudjonsson 70) Att: 10,000

Lierse 3 (Spiteri 19, 80, Cavens 68)
Standard 0 Att: 6,000

Lokeren 1 (Koller 79)
Gent 4 (Zere og 9, Degryse 53, Collen 80, De Craeke 82) Att: 4,000

Lommel 2 (Dekelver 23, Eshun 25)
Charleroi 1 (Sousa 90) Att: 5,000

St Truiden 1 (Vrancken 67)
Beveren 1 (Van Den Eede 5) Att: 3,000

BELGIUM – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Genk	34	22	7	5	74	38	73
Club Brugge	34	22	5	7	65	38	71
Anderlecht	34	21	7	6	76	39	70
Mouscron	34	19	9	6	76	47	66
Lokeren	34	17	6	11	69	61	57
Standard	34	17	3	14	55	47	54
Lierse	34	16	6	12	72	47	54
Gent	34	14	10	10	55	59	52
St Truiden	34	14	9	11	52	46	51
Ekeren	34	14	7	13	48	46	49
Harelbeke	34	10	11	13	44	46	41
Westerlo	34	11	7	16	56	62	40
Eendracht Aalst	34	9	8	17	48	66	35
Charleroi	34	7	11	16	40	54	32
Beveren	34	8	6	20	33	60	30
Lommel	34	7	7	20	33	56	28
Kortrijk	34	6	7	21	49	81	25
Ostende	34	4	10	20	27	79	22

LEAGUE CUP – SEMI-FINAL

Apr 20: Genk 1 St Truiden 1 *St Truiden won on pens*

FINAL

Thursday, May 13

St Truiden 4 (Teppers pen 20, 54, Rudonja 68, 76)
Ekeren 3 (Van Ankeren 61, Morhaye 85, Hofmans 89) Att: 3,500

BULGARIA

Apr 24: Dobrudzha 1 Litex 2; Slavia 2 Minjor 2; Metalurg 3 Botev 1; Lev Kjustendil 1 Lok Sofia 0; Pirin 2 Shumen 0; Lok Plovdiv 2 Neftohimik 4; Septemvri 2 CSKA 5.
Apr 25: Lev Sofia 1 Spartak Varna 0.
May 4: Slavia 0 CSKA 1.
May 5: Spartak Varna 2 Minjor 0; Lok Plovdiv 2 Botev 1; Metalurg 2 Shumen 1; Lev Kjustendil 2 Pirin 0; Dobrudzha 2 Neftohimik 1; Lev Sofia 0 Litex 0; Septemvri 0 Lok Sofia 1.
May 8: Shumen 3 Septemvri 2; Pirin 2 Metalurg 1; Lok Sofia 4 Lok Plovdiv 1; Botev 1 Slavia 0; Minjor 2 Litex 3; CSKA 3 Dobrudzha 0; Neftohimik 4 Spartak Varna 1.
May 9: Lev Kjustendil 0 Lev Sofia 1.
May 14: Septemvri 2 Pirin 3.
May 15: Lev Sofia 2 Minjor 0; Litex 3 Neftohimik 1; Spartak Varna 0 CSKA 2; Dobrudzha 4 Botev 0; Lok Plovdiv 1 Shumen 3; Metalurg 1 Lev Kjustendil 2; Slavia 2 Lok Sofia 3.

BULGARIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Litex	28	22	4	2	78	23	70
Lev Sofia	28	21	5	2	49	11	68
Lev Kjustendil	28	16	4	8	51	27	51
Lok Sofia	28	16	3	9	40	27	51
CSKA	28	15	6	7	52	34	50
Neftohimik	28	14	4	10	49	34	46
Slavia	28	10	8	10	42	33	38
Minjor	28	10	7	11	41	44	37
Metalurg	28	11	2	15	32	40	35
Dobrudzha	28	10	3	15	39	49	33
Spartak Varna	28	10	3	15	36	46	33
Pirin	28	9	4	15	28	52	31
Shumen	28	7	8	13	33	51	29
Botev	28	8	5	15	31	51	29
Lok Plovdiv	28	4	5	19	24	65	17
Septemvri	28	3	5	20	30	68	14

CROATIA

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFFS

Apr 17: Rijeka 2 Varteks 1; Hajduk 4 Osijek 1.
Apr 18: Croatia 1 Hrvatski drag 0.
Apr 21: Varteks 1 Hajduk 2; Hrvatski drag 3 Osijek 2; Croatia 0 Rijeka 1.
Apr 25: Rijeka 3 Hrvatski drag 0; Hajduk 1 Croatia 0; Osijek 0 Varteks 2.
May 2: Hrvatski drag 3 Varteks 0; Croatia 1 Osijek 1; Rijeka 3 Hajduk 3.
May 9: Hajduk 6 Hrvatski drag 1; Osijek 5 Rijeka 2; Varteks 1 Croatia 2.
May 12: Hrvatski drag 1 Croatia 1; Varteks 1 Rijeka 1; Osijek 1 Hajduk 1.
May 16: Osijek 2 Hrvatski drag 1; Hajduk 4 Varteks 1; Rijeka 0 Croatia 2.

CROATIA – PLAY-OFFS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hajduk	7	5	2	0	21	8	38
Croatia	7	3	2	2	7	5	38
Rijeka	7	3	2	2	12	12	37
Osijek	7	2	2	3	12	14	26
Hrvatski drag	7	2	1	4	9	15	20
Varteks	7	1	1	5	7	14	19

Top six from regular season play-off for the title, taking with them half the points they gained.

CYPRUS

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anorthosis	26	21	4	1	95	28	67
Omonia	26	21	4	1	81	25	67
APOEL	26	19	2	5	70	29	59
AEK	26	14	3	9	63	45	45
AEL	26	13	5	8	55	39	44
Ethnikos	26	12	6	8	49	43	42
Apollon	26	13	2	11	51	45	41
ENP	26	8	8	10	55	64	32
Olympiakos	26	8	5	13	40	49	29
Nea Salamis	26	8	4	14	46	53	28
Alki	26	7	4	15	37	70	25
Evagoras	26	6	4	16	30	66	22
Doxa	26	2	3	21	27	79	9
Aris	26	3	0	23	32	96	9

CZECH REPUBLIC

Apr 25: Olomouc 3 Opava 1; Drnovice 1 Liberec 1; Karvina 1 Slavia 2; Kralove 0 Chmel Blsany 4; Sparta 3 Dukla 0; Jablonec 2 Ostrava 2; Zizkov 0 Brno 2.
Apr 26: Plzen 0 Teplice 0.
Apr 30: Dukla 0 Kralove 0.
May 1: Slavia 4 Drnovice 0; Ostrava 2 Sparta 0.
May 2: Zizkov 2 Olomouc 0; Brno 3 Jablonec 0; Chmel Blsany 1 Plzen 1; Teplice 3 Karvina 0; Liberec 1 Opava 0.
May 9: Olomouc 3 Liberec 0; Drnovice 0 Teplice 2; Karvina 2 Blsany 0; Plzen 2 Dukla 1; Kralove 0 Ostrava 2; Sparta 4 Brno 1; Jablonec 0 Zizkov 1.
May 10: Opava 0 Slavia 4.
May 12: Jablonec 3 Olomouc 2; Zizkov 1 Sparta 6; Brno 0 Kralove 1; Ostrava 0 Plzen 1; Dukla 3 Karvina 1.
May 13: Chmel Blsany 3 Drnovice 1; Teplice 4 Opava 0; Slavia 1 Liberec 0.
May 16: Karvina 1 Ostrava 3; Plzen 2 Brno 0; Kralove 0 Zizkov 1; Sparta 2 Jablonec 0.
May 17: Olomouc 1 Slavia 1; Liberec 0 Teplice 1; Opava 1 Chmel Blsany 1; Drnovice 1 Dukla 2.

CZECH REP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sparta	28	17	8	3	59	19	59
Teplice	28	15	7	6	52	27	52
Slavia	28	14	10	4	45	26	52
Olomouc	28	11	10	7	38	32	43
Ostrava	28	9	14	5	37	25	41
Chmel Blsany	28	12	5	11	44	37	41
Brno	28	10	7	11	33	31	37
Drnovice	28	9	9	10	33	42	36
Liberec	28	8	10	10	27	32	34
Zizkov	28	10	4	14	27	46	34
Kralove	28	9	6	13	29	38	33
Jablonec	28	8	8	12	33	42	32
Plzen	28	8	8	12	24	37	32
Opava	28	8	7	13	39	51	31
Dukla	28	7	9	12	25	35	30
Karvina	28	6	4	18	25	50	22

DENMARK

Apr 23: Silkeborg 0 AaB 0.
Apr 25: AGF 2 Herfolge 1; Brondby 3 AB 0; FC Copenhagen 1 B93 0; Vejle 4 Viborg 1.
Apr 26: Lyngby 1 Aarhus Fremad 1.
Apr 30: Aarhus Fremad 1 AB 3; AaB 4 FC Copenhagen 3.
May 2: AGF 1 Lyngby 1; B93 0 Vejle 2; Herfolge 1 Silkeborg 1; Viborg 2 Brondby 0.
May 5: AB 1 Lyngby 3; Aarhus Fremad 3 Viborg 2; Brondby 4 B93 1; FC Copenhagen 0 Herfolge 1; Silkeborg 2 AGF 0; Vejle 0 AaB 1.
May 9: AGF 2 FC Copenhagen 1; B93 1 Aarhus Fremad 3; Herfolge 2 Vejle 0; Lyngby 2 Silkeborg 2; Viborg 1 AB 0.
May 10: AaB 0 Brondby 0.
May 14: Vejle 2 AGF 2.
May 16: AB 1 B93 3; Aarhus Fremad 1 AaB 3; FC Copenhagen 2 Silkeborg 2; Viborg 5 Lyngby 2.
May 17: Brondby 1 Herfolge 0.

DENMARK

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AaB	28	15	11	2	56	31	56
Brondby	28	17	3	8	60	29	54
AB	28	15	5	8	42	27	50
Lyngby	28	11	9	8	42	49	42
FC Copenhagen	28	10	9	9	49	45	39
Vejle	28	11	5	12	44	40	38
Silkeborg	28	8	14	6	41	40	38
Herfolge	28	9	10	9	32	28	37
AGF	28	9	9	10	35	45	36
Viborg	28	10	4	14	50	53	34
Aarhus Fremad	28	6	6	16	42	59	24
B93	28	3	3	22	19	66	12

DANISH CUP – SEMI-FINALS

2nd legs
Apr 15: AaB 2 Silkeborg 0 *AaB won 6-4 on agg*; AB 2 Brondby 0 *AB won 3-1 on agg.*

FINAL

Thursday, May 13

AB 2 (A Nielsen 42, C Hermansen 72)
AaB 1 (Frederiksen 43) Att: 25,113

ENGLAND

Saturday, April 24

Aston Villa 2 (Draper 45, Barry 57)
Nottm Forest 0 Att: 34,492

Blackburn 1 (Duff 63)
Liverpool 3 (McManaman 23, Redknapp 32, Leonhardsen 32) Att: 29,944

Derby 0
Southampton 0 Att: 26,557

Everton 4 (Hutchison 24, Campbell 31, 60, Jeffers 75)
Charlton 1 (Stuart pen 81) Att: 40,089

Leicester 1 (Marshall 45)
Coventry 0 Att: 20,224

Middlesbrough 1 (Armstrong 87)
Arsenal 6 (Overmars pen 4, Anelka 38, 78, Kanu 45, 60, Vieira 58) Att: 34,630

Tottenham 1 (Ginola 73)
West Ham 2 (Wright 5, Keller 66) Att: 36,089

Wimbledon 1 (Hartson 24)
Newcastle 1 (Shearer 18) Att: 21,172

Sunday, April 25

Leeds 1 (Hasselbaink 32)
Man Utd 1 (Cole 56) Att: 40,255

Sheffield Wed 0
Chelsea 0 Att: 21,652

Saturday, May 1

Charlton 0
Blackburn 0 Att: 20,041

Chelsea 3 (Zola 25, 81, Petrescu 60)
Everton 1 (Jeffers 69) Att: 34,909

Coventry 2 (Huckerby 16, Whelan 29)
Wimbledon 1 (Hartson 74) Att: 21,200

Liverpool 3 (Redknapp 49, Ince 77, McManaman 79)
Tottenham 2 (Carragher og 13, Iversen 35) Att: 44,007

Man Utd 2 (Watson og 20, Beckham 46)
Aston Villa 1 (Joachim 33) Att: 55,189

Newcastle 1 (Shearer pen 64)
Middlesbrough 1 (Mustoe 60) Att: 36,552

Nottm Forest 2 (Porfirio 14, Rogers 16)
Sheffield Wed 0 Att: 20,480

Southampton 2 (Marsden 37, Beattie 74)
Leicester 1 (Marshall 17) Att: 15,228

West Ham 1 (Di Canio 48)
Leeds 5 (Hasselbaink 1, Smith 45, Harte 62, Bowyer 78, Haaland 79) Att: 25,997

Sunday, May 2

Arsenal 1 (Anelka 14)
Derby 0 Att: 37,323

Wednesday, May 5

Chelsea 1 (Poyet 68)
Leeds 0 Att: 34,762

Leicester 1 (Sinclair 28)
Derby 2 (Sturridge 17, Beck 60) Att: 20,535

Liverpool 2 (Redknapp pen 69, Ince 89)
Man Utd 2 (Yorke 23, Irwin pen 56) Att: 44,702

Tottenham 1 (Anderton 43)
Arsenal 3 (Petit 17, Anelka 33, Kanu 85) Att: 36,019

Saturday, May 8

Aston Villa 3 (Barry 7, Joachim 66, 79)
Charlton 4 (Barry og 3, Mendonca 56, Robinson 68, Mills 89) Att: 37,705

Blackburn 1 (Gallacher 25)
Nottm Forest 2 (Freedman 12, Bart-Williams 56) Att: 24,565

Derby 0
Coventry 0 Att: 32,450

Everton 6 (Campbell 14, 52, 77, Ball pen 25, Hutchison 38, Jeffers 87)
West Ham 0 Att: 40,049

Leicester 2 (Izzet 20, Cottee 41)
Newcastle 0 Att: 21,125

Sheffield Wed 1 (Cresswell 87)
Liverpool 0 Att: 27,383

Wimbledon 0
Southampton 2 (Beattie 72, Le Tissier 84) Att: 24,068

Sunday, May 9

Middlesbrough 0
Man Utd 1 (Yorke 45) Att: 34,665

Monday, May 10

Tottenham 2 (Iversen 38, Ginola 64)
Chelsea 2 (Poyet 4, Goldbaek 72) Att: 35,878

Tuesday, May 11

Leeds 1 (Hasselbaink 86)
Arsenal 0 Att: 40,124

Wednesday, May 12

Blackburn 0
Man Utd 0 Att: 30,436

Sunday, May 16

Arsenal 1 (Kanu 66)
Aston Villa 0 Att: 38,308

Charlton 0
Sheffield Wed 1 (Sonner 79) Att: 20,043

Chelsea 2 (Babayaro 40, Vialli 61)
Derby 1 (Carbonari 88) Att: 35,016

Coventry 2 (Aloisi 63, Telfer 72)
Leeds 2 (Wijnhard 43, Hopkin 90) Att: 23,049

Liverpool 3 (Berger 12, Riedle 50, Ince 65)
Wimbledon 0 Att: 41,902

Man Utd 2 (Beckham 43, Cole 48)
Tottenham 1 (Ferdinand 25) Att: 55,189

Newcastle 1 (Hamann 51)
Blackburn 1 (Wilcox 37) Att: 36,623

Nottm Forest 1 (Bart-Williams 76)
Leicester 0 Att: 25,353

Southampton 2 (Pahars 24, 68)
Everton 0 Att: 15,254

West Ham 4 (Lampard 4, Keller 26, Sinclair 75, 78)
Middlesbrough 0 Att: 25,902

ENGLAND – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Manchester Utd	38	22	13	3	80	37	79
Arsenal	38	22	12	4	59	17	78
Chelsea	38	20	15	3	57	30	75
Leeds United	38	18	13	7	62	34	67
West Ham	38	16	9	13	46	53	57
Aston Villa	38	15	10	13	51	46	55
Liverpool	38	15	9	14	68	49	54
Derby County	38	13	13	12	40	45	52
Middlesbrough	38	12	15	11	48	54	51
Leicester City	38	12	13	13	40	46	49
Tottenham	38	11	14	13	47	50	47
Newcastle	38	11	13	14	48	54	46
Sheffield Wed	38	13	7	18	41	42	46
Everton	38	11	10	17	42	47	43
Wimbledon	38	10	12	16	40	63	42
Coventry City	38	11	9	18	39	51	42
Southampton	38	11	8	19	37	64	41
Charlton Athletic	38	8	12	18	41	56	36
Blackburn	38	7	14	17	38	52	35
Nottm Forest	38	7	9	22	35	69	30

FRANCE

Saturday, April 24

Auxerre 2 (Rodriguez og 36, Baticle 44)
Montpellier 2 (Delaye 24, Robert 78) Att: 9,000

Lens 4 (Vairelles 44, 70, Moreira 67, 78)
Marseille 0 Att: 42,000

Lorient 0
Strasbourg 1 (Zitelli 66) Att: 12,000

Monaco 1 (Legwinski 90)
Bastia 1 (Nee 8) Att: 6,000

Nancy 2 (Meride og 81, Correa 90)
Toulouse 0 Att: 8,000

Nantes 0
Metz 0 Att: 26,000

Sochaux 2 (Dallet 27, B Bouger 75)
Bordeaux 0 Att: 12,000

Sunday, April 25

Lyon 1 (Cocard 90)
Rennes 2 (Bardon 34, Nonda pen 72) Att: 35,000

Paris SG 3 (Madar 42, 50, Worns 45)
Le Havre 0 Att: 33,000

Friday, April 30

Bordeaux 0
Monaco 1 (Lamouchi 27) Att: 36,000

Marseille 0
Lyon 0 Att: 60,000

Toulouse 1 (Maharzi 43)
Lorient 4 (Bouafia 54, 66, Loko 56, Camadini 80) Att: 12,000

Saturday, May 1

Bastia 1 (Laurent 56)
Lens 1 (Moreira 55) Att: 5,000

Le Havre 1 (Nalis 57)
Nancy 1 (Bastien 21) Att: 12,000

Metz 2 (Danjou og 4, Horlaville 48)
Auxerre 0 Att: 15,000

Montpellier 1 (Silvestre 51)
Nantes 2 (Devineau 29, Suffo 78) Att: 10,000

Rennes 2 (Gregoire 14, Bardon 89)
Paris SG 1 (Adailton 51) Att: 17,000

Strasbourg 1 (Zitelli 56)
Sochaux 1 (Flachez 66) Att: 15,000

Tuesday, May 4

Lens 2 (Moreira 14, Nyarko 35)
Bordeaux 4 (Ivan 4, 44, Wiltord 83, Micoud 90) Att: 42,000

Montpellier 1 (Thimothee pen 79)
Metz 1 (Vanhandenhoven 38) Att: 8,000

Paris SG 2 (Simone 84, Rodriguez 87)
Marseille 1 (Maurice 21) Att: 45,000

Wednesday, May 5

Auxerre 0
Le Havre 0 Att: 7,000

Lyon 2 (Job 45, Casanova og 56)
Bastia 1 (Laurent 4) Att: 22,000

Monaco 2 (Giuly 29, Trezeguet 76)
Strasbourg 1 (Bertin 65) Att: 3,000

Nancy 2 (Cascarino 16, Biancalani 90)
Lorient 0 Att: 12,000

Nantes 2 (Chanelet 17, Toure 79)
Rennes 1 (Bardon 11) Att: 33,000

Sochaux 2 (B Bouger 55, Frau 60)
Toulouse 1 (Lauwers 70) Att: 8,000

Wednesday, May 12

Sochaux 1 (Ljuboja 58)
Le Havre 0 Att: 12,000

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bordeaux	32	20	6	6	62	27	66
Marseille	32	19	8	5	54	28	65
Lyon	32	17	9	6	48	28	60
Monaco	32	16	8	8	49	31	56
Rennes	32	16	8	8	44	36	56
Nantes	32	12	12	8	40	32	48
Lens	32	13	6	13	42	41	45
Paris SG	32	10	9	13	31	30	39
Montpellier	32	10	9	13	49	49	39
Nancy	32	10	8	14	33	42	38
Strasbourg	32	8	13	11	27	32	37
Metz	32	8	12	12	27	36	36
Bastia	32	9	8	15	36	43	35
Auxerre	32	8	10	14	38	44	34
Le Havre	32	8	10	14	22	36	34
Lorient	32	7	11	14	29	47	32
Sochaux	32	6	14	12	28	49	32
Toulouse	32	5	11	16	21	49	26

FRENCH CUP – SEMI-FINALS

Apr 27: Sedan 4 Le Mans 3 (aet).
Apr 28: Nantes 1 Nimes 0.

FINAL

Saturday, May 15

Nantes 1 (Monterrubio pen 57)
Sedan 0 Att: 78,586

LEAGUE CUP – FINAL

Saturday, May 8

Lens 1 (Moreira 56)
Metz 0 Att: 80,000

GERMANY

Friday, April 23

Borussia Dortmund 2 (Herrlich 52, Moller 86)
Werder Bremen 1 (Trares 34) Att: 68,600

Stuttgart 0
Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Kirsten 37) Att: 28,000

Saturday, April 24

Borussia MG 5 (Sopic 18, Pettersson 28, 80, Polster 58, Pflipsen 84)
Wolfsburg 2 (Prager 61, C Akonnor 67) Att: 21,500

Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (B Schneider 54, Westerthaler 89)
Hansa Rostock 2 (Wibran 42, Agali 68) Att: 32,000

Hertha 4 (Wosz 11, 81, H Herzog 18, Hartmann 37)
Bochum 1 (Buckley 72) Att: 45,646

Kaiserslautern 0
Freiburg 2 (Weisshaupt 37, Baya 89) Att: 41,500

Nurnberg 0
Duisburg 2 (Wohlert 4, Beierle 90) Att: 26,000

Schalke 1 (Thon 6)
Hamburg 4 (Panadic 22, Groth 36, Butt pen 61, Yeboah 72) Att: 49,800

Sunday, April 25

1860 Munich 1 (Kurz 89)
Bayern Munich 1 (Babbel 75) Att: 69,000

Friday, April 30

Bochum 0
Nurnberg 3 (Ciric 16, 71, Kurth 65) Att: 22,007

Freiburg 2 (Ben Slimane 29, Kobiaschwili 49)
Eintracht Frankfurt 0 Att: 22,500

Saturday, May 1

Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Ramelow 9, Emerson 46)
Hertha 2 (Nowotny og 25, Herzog 52) Att: 22,500

Bayern Munich 4 (Basler 33, Zickler 68, 69, Scholl 84)
Borussia MG 2 (Polster pen 25, Pettersson 54) Att: 63,000

Hamburg 2 (Yeboah 37, Kiriakov 47)
Kaiserslautern 0 Att: 26,212

Hansa Rostock 4 (Neuville 3, 36, pen 43, Agali 40)
1860 Munich 1 (Hobsch 52) Att: 21,000

Wolfsburg 3 (Schroder 62, Baumgart 64, Prager 86)
Stuttgart 2 (Kies 5, Rost 15) Att: 17,016

Sunday, May 2

Duisburg 3 (Spies 30, Hirsch 40, Beierle 42)
Borussia Dortmund 2 (Stevic pen 45, Nijhuis 79) Att: 27,983

Tuesday, May 4

Borussia MG 1 (Feldhoff 68)
Hansa Rostock 1 (Wibran 63) Att: 13,000

Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Schur 24, Yang 42)
Hamburg 2 (Yeboah 73, Hoogma 90) Att: 23,500

Kaiserslautern 4 (Schjonberg 35, pen 68, Rosler 59, Rische 80)
Werder Bremen 0 Att: 40,100

Stuttgart 0
Bayern Munich 2 (Scholl 62, Jancker 82) Att: 53,000

Wednesday, May 5

Bochum 0
Duisburg 2 (Hajto 25, Wohlert 55) Att: 22,107

Hertha 2 (Preetz 32, 74)
Wolfsburg 0 Att: 54,544

Nurnberg 2 (Ciric 24, Weigl 74)
Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Ramelow 3, Emerson 84) Att: 31,300

Schalke 1 (Mulder 31)
Borussia Dortmund 1 (Nijhuis 3) Att: 61,700

1860 Munich 2 (Vanenburg 37, Hobsch 83)
Freiburg 0 Att: 23,000

Friday, May 7

Hansa Rostock 3 (Rehmer 29, Majak 79, 89)
Stuttgart 0 Att: 21,000

Werder Bremen 1 (Bode 72)
Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Schur 55, Sobotzik 69) Att: 31,485

Saturday, May 8

Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Kirsten 21, Hejduk 64)
Bochum 0 Att: 22,500

Borussia Dortmund 1 (Chapuisat 11)
Kaiserslautern 0 Att: 68,600

Duisburg 1 (Hajto 37)
Schalke 2 (Muller 47, Mulder 82) Att: 23,035

Freiburg 2 (Baya 42, Pavlin 86)
Borussia MG 1 (Hausweiler 62) Att: 22,500

Hamburg 3 (Groth 67, 88, Butt pen 73)
1860 Munich 0 Att: 22,333

Wolfsburg 1 (Prager 90)
Nurnberg 1 (Baumann 29) Att: 14,849

Sunday, May 9

Bayern Munich 1 (Jancker 12)
Hertha 1 (Schmidt 72) Att: 63,000

Tuesday, May 11

Werder Bremen 1 (Dabrowski 54)
Schalke 0 Att: 34,495

Friday, May 14

Borussia MG 2 (Sopic 62, Hausweiler 78)
Hamburg 2 (Yeboah 58, Butt pen 90) Att: 25,300

Hertha 2 (Neuendorf 74, Hartmann 83)
Hansa Rostock 0 Att: 76,000

Saturday, May 15

Bochum 0
Wolfsburg 2 (Thomsen 27, 75) Att: 20,194

Duisburg 0
Bayer Leverkusen 0 Att: 16,043

Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Fjortoft 40, Sobotzik 49)
Borussia Dortmund 0 Att: 50,000

1860 Munich 1 (Hobsch 18)
Werder Bremen 3 (Wojtala 10, Bode 38, Maximov 86) Att: 27,600

Nurnberg 2 (Ciric 70, Driller 81)
Bayern Munich 0 Att: 44,600

Stuttgart 3 (Thiam 44, 87, Bobic 60)
Freiburg 1 (Gunes 33) Att: 45,000

Sunday, May 16

Schalke 0
Kaiserslautern 2 (Schjonberg pen 73, Rische 89) Att: 41,119

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	32	22	6	4	70	25	72
Bayer Leverkusen	32	17	12	3	60	27	63
Hertha Berlin	32	16	8	8	51	31	56
Kaiserslautern	32	16	6	10	47	42	54
Wolfsburg	32	14	10	8	52	43	52
B Dortmund	32	15	8	9	43	33	51
Hamburg	32	12	11	9	43	39	47
Duisburg	32	12	10	10	42	41	46
1860 Munich	32	11	8	13	44	48	41
Schalke	32	9	11	12	34	47	38
Stuttgart	32	8	12	12	39	45	36
Freiburg	32	9	9	14	34	41	36
Nurnberg	32	7	15	10	38	47	36
Werder Bremen	32	9	8	15	37	45	35
Hansa Rostock	32	8	10	14	45	55	34
Eintracht Frankfurt	32	7	10	15	36	51	31
Bochum	32	7	8	17	36	58	29
Borussia MG	32	4	9	19	40	73	21

GREECE

Apr 19: Panathinaikos 5 Ethnikos P 1.
Apr 24: Paniliakos 1 OFI 2.
Apr 25: Proodeftiki 1 Veroia 0; Xanthi 4 Kavala 1; Ethnikos A 0 Eleysina 0; Olympiakos 1 Aris 0; PAOK 3 Apollon 1; Ionikos 2 AEK 1; Iraklis 3 Panathinaikos 3.
Apr 26: Panionios 2 Ethnikos P 0.
May 1: Eleysina 0 PAOK 4.
May 2: Paniliakos 2 Panionios 0; Ethnikos P 1 Iraklis 2; OFI 0 Proodeftiki 0; Panathinaikos 2 Xanthi 1; Kavala 0 Olympiakos 2; Aris 2 AEK 0; Apollon 1 Ionikos 1.
May 3: Veroia 3 Ethnikos A 1.
May 9: Panionios 3 Iraklis 2; Proodeftiki 2 Paniliakos 0; Xanthi 2 Ethnikos P 0; Ethnikos A 1 OFI 0; Olympiakos 0 Panathinaikos 0; PAOK 2 Veroia 0; AEK 4 Kavala 0; Ionikos 3 Eleysina 0; Aris 2 Apollon 1.
May 12: Iraklis 2 Xanthi 2; Paniliakos 1 Ethnikos A 0; Ethnikos P 0 Olympiakos 3; OFI 3 PAOK 2; Panathinaikos 0 AEK 0; Veroia 0 Ionikos 2; Kavala 0 Apollon 1; Eleysina 0 Aris 1;
May 13: Proodeftiki 0 Panionios 0.
May 16: Kavala 3 Eleysina 0; Panionios 0 Xanthi 2; Ethnikos A 2 Proodeftiki 2; Olympiakos 3 Iraklis 2; PAOK 2 Paniliakos 0; AEK 2 Ethnikos P 0; Ionikos 2 OFI 0; Apollon 1 Panathinaikos 3; Aris 2 Veroia 0.
May 19: Ethnikos A 2 Panionios 2; Xanthi 0 Olympiakos 2; Proodeftiki 2 PAOK 1; Iraklis 2 AEK 3; Paniliakos 1 Ionikos 4; OFI 2 Aris 4; Panathinaikos 2 Eleysina 0.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	32	26	3	3	78	21	81
AEK	32	22	5	5	69	26	71
Panathinaikos	32	21	5	6	62	34	68
Aris	32	18	3	11	49	40	57
Ionikos	32	16	8	8	61	35	56
PAOK	32	17	5	10	44	30	56
Xanthi	32	15	8	9	42	31	53
OFI	32	15	3	14	46	41	48
Iraklis	32	12	8	12	50	41	44
Kavala	31	11	6	14	44	58	39
Ethnikos A	32	11	6	15	38	52	39
Proodeftiki	32	9	9	14	26	34	36
Paniliakos	32	10	5	17	34	51	35
Apollon	31	8	9	14	38	56	33
Panionios	32	9	5	18	41	51	32
Eleysina	32	5	11	16	19	47	26
Veroia	31	5	5	21	18	52	20
Ethnikos P	31	0	8	23	15	74	8

GREEK CUP – SEMI-FINALS

2nd legs
13-14 Apr: Athinaikos 2 Panathinaikos 2
Panathinaikos won 8-3 on agg; Iraklis 1 Olympiakos 1
Olympiakos won 5-1 on agg.

FINAL

Tuesday, May 5

Panathinaikos 0
Olympiakos 2 (Mavrogenidis 53, Ofori-Quaye 89) Att: 40,000

HOLLAND

Friday, April 23

De Graafschap 1 (Den Turk 43)
PSV 0 Att: 8,600

Saturday, April 24

Cambuur 2 (Van Rijswijk 31, Diikhuizen 45)
Sparta 4 (Den Dunnen 42, Tammer 50, Wouden 85, Van der Laan 89) Att: 8,000

Heerenveen 2 (Samardzic 66, Tzvetkov 83)
AZ 1 (Fertout 72) Att: 13,800

Sunday, April 25

Feyenoord 2 (Tomasson 36, Cruz 41)
NAC 2 (Shoukov 30, Arveladze 66) Att: 47,000

Fortuna 0
Roda JC 1 (Peeters 57) Att: 7,800

NEC 3 (Latuheru 49, De Gier 51, 68)
Vitesse 1 (Van den Brom 54) Att: 6,000

Utrecht 0
MVV 2 (Emerson 17, De Jong 90) Att: 13,500

Waalwijk 2 (Van der Leegte 31, 45)
Twente 2 (Vennegoor 6, 90) Att: 4,600

Willem II 3 (Bombarda 21, Schulp 73, 87)
Ajax 1 (Hoekstra 48) Att: 14,743

Friday, April 30

MVV 3 (De Jong 16, Perez 49, Janssen 90)
NAC 3 (Sjoukov 32, A. Arveladze 48, Van der Weert 71) Att: 6,000

Saturday, May 1

Cambuur 0
Heerenveen 0 Att: 11,200

Roda JC 3 (Nygaard 45, Valgaeren 83, Zafarin 90)
De Graafschap 1 (Viscaal 75) Att: 6,000

Twente 2 (De Witte 45, Jeffrey 54)
Fortuna 2 (Simons 26, Vennegoor of Hesselink 70) Att: 12,000

PSV 2 (Rommedahl 3, Van Nistelrooy 55)
Waalwijk 2 (Hoogendorp 68, 71) Att: 27,000

Vitesse 0
AZ 1 (Huiberts 31) Att: 23,500

Sunday, May 2

Ajax 6 (Gronkjaer 30, Wamberto 48, Sibon 49, Litmanen 68, 84, S Arveladze 90)
Feyenoord 0 Att: 40,543

NEC 0
Utrecht 1 (Mols 16) Att: 5,000

Sparta 0
William II 4 (Bombarda 14, Ramzi 40, Ceesay 87, Schulp 90) Att: 4,500

Friday, May 7

Fortuna 6 (Simons 15, 42, 52, 63, Bouma 25, Ooijer og 47)
PSV 4 (Van Nistelrooy pen 40, 53, Nilis 79, Lucius 81) Att: 7,000

Saturday, May 8

AZ 1 (Langerak 85)
NEC 1 (Janssen 55) Att: 7,107

Heerenveen 2 (G de Nooijer 39, Samardzic 77)
Roda JC 2 (Peeters 7, Van der Luer 89) Att: 13,800

NAC 5 (Arveladze 18, 30, 52, Stewart 60, Van der Weert 89)
Sparta 0 Att: 10,459

Willem II 4 (Bombarda 22, Plum 38, Valk 49, Ramzi 82)
MVV 1 (De Jong pen 50) Att: 14,600

Sunday, May 9

De Graafschap 1 (Godee pen 41)
Ajax 3 (Sibon 48, Melchiot 65, Hoekstra 85) Att: 9,200

Feyenoord 3 (Paauwe 8, Cairo 15, Tomasson 66)
Twente 1 (De Witte 84) Att: 25,026

Utrecht 1 (Mols 59)
Vitesse 2 (Jochemsen 20, Booth 65) Att: 13,700

Waalwijk 4 (Govedarica 20, Cornelisse 27, Lanckohr 37, Petrov 87)
Cambuur 1 (De Ron pen 34) Att: 5,500

Wednesday, May 12

Roda JC 1 (Lawal 76)
Feyenoord 0 Att: 8,000

Sunday, May 16

Ajax 2 (Litmanen 43, 90)
Waalwijk 0 Att: 35,000

Cambuur 0
Willem II 2 (Galasek 74, Hermes 84) Att: 8,000

MVV 1 (Emerson 4)
Heerenveen 0 Att: 4,600

NEC 0
Feyenoord 3 (Van Vossen 42, Vos 70, Gyan 83) Att: 5,500

PSV 7 (Van der Weerden 8, 24, Nilis 14, 87, Xavier 44, Van Nistelrooy 50, Rommedahl 70)
AZ 1 (Obiku 81) Att: 26,500

Roda JC 3 (Van Houdt 36, 54, Peeters 80)
Utrecht 0 Att: 7,500

Sparta 5 (Ferguson 17, El Khattabi 20, 70, Krijgsman 58, 66)
Fortuna 0 Att: 3,500

Twente 2 (De Witte 27, Vennegoor of Hesselink 77)
NAC 2 (Shoukov 12, 75) Att: 11,500

Vitesse 2 (Machlas 12, 90)
De Graafschap 1 (Viscaal 67) Att: 24,500

Friday, May 21

Fortuna Sittard 2 (Simons 29, Jeffrey 90)
NEC 3 (De Gier 58, 81, Tumani 67) Att: 6,500

Saturday, May 22

De Graafschap 2 (Godee pen 65, Nok 75)
Cambuur 2 (Levchenko 33, Abma 50) Att: 7,250

Sunday, May 23

AZ 4 (Fertout 23, Buskermolen 62, Langerak 69, 76)
MVV 2 (Perez 71, Kortchaquine 79) Att: 7,334

Feyenoord 2 (Paauwe 67, Tomasson 85)
Vitesse 1 (Reuser 35) Att: 35,193

Heerenveen 0 Sparta 0 Att: 13,900

NAC 2 (Arveladze 47, Stewart 82)
Ajax 2 (McCarthy 58, 72) Att: 13,600

Utrecht 2 (Mols 4, De Jong 33)
PSV 3 (Van Nistelrooy pen 71, Gakhokidze 75, Bruggink 90) Att: 13,000

Waalwijk 4 (Govedarica 42, 85, Lanckohr pen 52, Van Nieuwkerk 89)
Roda JC 1 (Peeters 14) Att: 6,000

Willem II 1 (Ceesay 33)
Twente 2 (Vennegoor 89, Bosman pen 90) Att: 14,250

HOLLAND – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Feyenoord	34	25	5	4	76	38	80
Willem II	34	20	5	9	69	46	65
PSV	34	17	10	7	87	55	61
Vitesse	34	18	7	9	61	44	61
Roda JC	34	17	9	8	59	40	60
Ajax	34	16	9	9	73	41	57
Heerenveen	34	14	12	8	53	41	54
Twente	34	13	13	8	51	45	52
AZ	34	12	12	10	52	60	48
Fortuna	34	12	8	14	49	56	44
NEC	34	10	9	15	42	56	39
Utrecht	34	10	8	16	54	64	38
De Graafschap	34	8	12	14	40	57	36
MVV	34	7	11	16	42	63	32
Cambuur	34	7	11	16	37	64	32
Waalwijk	34	6	9	19	41	62	27
Sparta	34	7	5	22	37	71	26
NAC	34	4	11	19	41	61	23

DUTCH CUP – FINAL

Thursday, May 13

Ajax 2 (Gronkjaer 10, 13)
Fortuna Sittard 0 Att: 25,000

HUNGARY

Apr 21: Haladas 1 Ferencvaros 2.
Apr 24: Zalaegerszeg 2 Vac 2; Gyor 1 Ferencvaros 2; Ujpest 1 Videoton 0; Debrecen 2 Nyiregyhaza 0; BVSC 3 Dunaferr 2; Siofok 2 Vasas 3; Gazszer 0 Kispest Honved 0; MTK 2 Haladas 4.
Apr 25: Kerulet 1 Diosgyor 2.
Apr 30: Kispest Honved 3 Siofok 0.
May 1: Dunaferr 2 Debrecen 0; Nyiregyhaza 0 Ujpest 2; Videoton 0 Gyor 0; Ferencvaros 4 Zalaegerszeg 0; Haladas 1 Gazszer 1; Vasas 3 BVSC 2; Diosgyor 0 Vac 1.
May 2: Kerulet 1 MTK 5.
May 5: Vac 1 Ferencvaros1; Zalaegerszeg 4 Videoton 2; Gyor 0 Nyiregyhaza 1; Ujpest 3 Dunaferr 0; Debrecen 0 Vasas 0; BVSC 3 Kispest Honved 0; Siofok 1 Haladas 0; Gazszer 3 Kerulet 2; MTK 4 Diosgyor 0.
May 8: Dunaferr 0 Gyor 0; Diosgyor 1 Ferencvaros 3; Nyiregyhaza 2 Zalaegerszeg 0; Videoton 3 Vac 2; MTK 2 Gazszer 0.
May 9: Kerulet 2 Siofok 3; Vasas 1 Ujpest 0.
May 10: Kispest Honved 0 Debrecen 0; Haladas 3 BVSC 1.
May 15: Vac 2 Nyiregyhaza 2; Zalaegerszeg 0 Dunaferr 1; Gyor 3 Vasas 3; Debrecen 1 Haladas 1; Siofok 0 MTK 1; Gazszer 2 Diosgyor 0.
May 16: Ferencvaros 2 Videoton 0; BVSC 3 Kerulet 0.
May 17: Ujpest 3 Kispest Honved 0.

HUNGARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MTK	30	25	2	3	71	20	77
Ferencvaros	30	18	7	5	58	34	61
Ujpest	30	18	3	9	51	32	57
Gyor	30	14	10	6	47	32	52
Dunaferr	30	15	5	10	47	40	47
Vasas	30	13	8	9	45	40	47
Zalaegerszeg	30	13	7	10	39	35	46
Vac	30	12	8	10	45	44	44
Diosgyor	30	11	9	10	50	51	42
Debrecen	30	11	7	12	43	36	40
Gazszer	30	9	11	10	31	33	38
Nyiregyhaza	30	9	9	12	41	48	36
Kispest Honved	30	8	9	13	31	45	33
Haladas	30	9	5	16	34	48	32
Videoton	30	6	8	16	32	48	26
BVSC	30	6	6	18	29	45	24
Siofok	30	5	9	16	27	45	24
Kerulet	30	4	5	21	34	79	17

ITALY

Sunday, April 25

Cagliari 2 (Mboma 31, O'Neill 88)
Perugia 2 (Ripa 11, Petrachi 60) Att: 21,626

Empoli 0
Bari 2 (Masinga 71, Marcolini 90) Att: 8,677

Inter 1 (Zamorano 53)
Udinese 3 (Amoroso pen 11, 64, Poggi 87) Att: 66,697

Juventus 2 (Inzaghi 24, Conte 87)
Fiorentina 1 (Tacchinardi og 85) Att: 46,979

Piacenza 0
Venezia 1 (Maniero 5) Att: 10,750

Roma 1 (Totti 82)
Parma 0 Att: 57,841

Salernitana 4 (Di Vaio pen 5, 17, 68, Kristic 90)
Bologna 0 Att: 30,859

Sampdoria 0
Lazio 1 (Vieri 60) Att: 31,972

Vicenza 0
Milan 2 (Bierhoff 39, Leonardo 72) Att: 19,715

Sunday, May 2

Bari 3 (De Ascentis 5, Masinga 84, Giorgetti pen 90)
Piacenza 1 (Dionigi 10) Att: 12,824

Bologna 1 (Signori 32)
Cagliari 3 (O'Neill 19, Macellari 45, Mboma 47) Att: 26,281

Fiorentina 5 (Batistuta 40, Rui Costa 43, 65, Edmundo pen 77, 90)
Perugia 1 (Kaviedes 78) Att: 40,000

Milan 3 (Ambrosini 17, Leonardo 79, Ganz 90)
Sampdoria 2 (Montella 60, Franceschetti 86) Att: 68,653

Parma 1 (Stanic 9)
Empoli 0 Att: 21,251

Salernitana 1 (Di Vaio 38)
Juventus 0 Att: 36,841

Udinese 0
Lazio 3 (Mihajlovic pen 30, Vieri 48, Mancini 57) Att: 28,824

Venezia 1 (Valtolina 89)
Vicenza 2 (Otero 45, 49) Att: 11,174

Monday, May 3

Roma 4 (Totti pen 26, Sergio 48, Delvecchio 49, Di Francesco 78)
Inter 5 (Ronaldo 18, 56, Zamorano 22, 35, Simeone 87) Att: 65,966

Saturday, May 8

Inter 1 (Ronaldo 25)
Parma 3 (Stanic 47, Asprilla 49, Fuser 62) Att: 65,744

Sunday, May 9

Cagliari 3 (Mboma 40, Beretta 68, 90)
Salernitana 1 (Di Vaio 26) Att: 25,704

Empoli 2 (Zalayeta 50, Tonetto 71)
Venezia 2 (Recoba pen 73, 90) Att: 12,614

Juventus 0
Milan 2 (Weah 46, 64) Att: 59,125

Lazio 2 (Almeyda 50, Vieri 89)
Bologna 0 Att: 57,507

Perugia 0
Bari 1 (Osmanovski 76) Att: 14,520

Piacenza 2 (Rastelli 32, Statuto 81)
Roma 0 Att: 21,352

Sampdoria 3 (Montella 29, 51, Palmieri 78)
Fiorentina 2 (Rui Costa pen 20, Heinrich 41) Att: 20,788

Vicenza 2 (Zauli 51, Dicara 62)
Udinese 3 (Amoroso pen 36, 45, Walem 60) Att: 17,262

Saturday, May 15

Fiorentina 1 (Batistuta 13)
Lazio 1 (Vieri 28) Att: 38,793

Milan 4 (Bierhoff 32, 55, 60, Leonardo 88)
Empoli 0 Att: 74,758

Sunday, May 16

Bari 0
Juventus 1 (Conte 82) Att: 32,457

Bologna 2 (Ingesson 27, pen 90)
Sampdoria 2 (Montella 5, 38) Att: 29,299

Parma 0
Piacenza 1 (Inzaghi 31) Att: 24,442

Roma 3 (Totti 16, 77, Di Francesco 34)
Cagliari 1 (Mboma 47) Att: 47,386

Salernitana 2 (Di Michele 40, Vannucchi 88)
Vicenza 1 (Mendez 47) Att: 34,331

Udinese 1 (Amoroso pen 63)
Perugia 2 (Petrachi 25, 46) Att: 37,374

Venezia 3 (Volpi 1, Recoba 4, Maniero 18)
Inter 1 (Ronaldo pen 51) Att: 12,137

Sunday, May 23

Cagliari 1 (Muzzi 90)
Fiorentina 1 (Zebina og 40) Att: 25,000

Empoli 1 (Di Napoli 22)
Udinese 3 (Jorgensen 24, Amoroso 53, 64) Att: 12,000

Inter 3 (Ronaldo 8, Simic 87, Ventola 89)
Bologna 1 (Simuntenkov 88) Att: 45,000

Juventus 3 (Conte 12, Inzaghi 45, Henry 85)
Venezia 2 (Pedone 63, Recoba 89) Att: 20,000

Lazio 2 (Salas 27, 76)
Parma 1 (Vanoli 55) Att: 75,000

Perugia 1 (Nakata pen 34)
Milan 2 (Guglielminpietro 11, Bierhoff 31) Att: 26,000

Piacenza 1 (Vierchowod 53)
Salernitana 1 (Fresi pen 64) Att: 21,000

Sampdoria 1 (Doriva 32)
Bari 0 Att: 17,000

Vicenza 1 (Ambrosetti 35)
Roma 4 (Paulo Sergio 27, Delvecchio 62, Gautieri 79, Fabio Junior 81) Att: 16,000

ITALY – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milan	34	20	10	4	59	34	70
Lazio	34	20	9	5	65	31	69
Fiorentina	34	16	8	10	55	41	56
Parma	34	15	10	9	55	36	55
Roma	34	15	9	10	69	49	54
Juventus	34	15	9	10	42	36	54
Udinese	34	16	6	12	52	52	54
Inter	34	13	7	14	59	54	46
Bologna	34	11	11	12	44	47	44
Bari	34	9	15	10	39	44	42
Venezia	34	11	9	14	38	45	42
Cagliari	34	11	8	15	49	50	41
Piacenza	34	11	8	15	48	49	41
Perugia	34	11	6	17	43	61	39
Salernitana	34	10	8	16	37	51	38
Sampdoria	34	9	10	15	38	55	37
Vicenza	34	8	9	17	27	47	33
Empoli	34	4	10	20	26	63	20

ITALIAN CUP – FINAL – 2ND LEG

Wednesday, May 5

Fiorentina 2 (Repka 48, Cois 62)
Parma 2 (Crespo 44, Vanoli 71) Att: 39,070
Aggregate 3-3. Parma won on away goals

LUXEMBOURG

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jeunesse Esch	22	16	3	3	56	13	51
F91 Dudelange	22	14	5	3	40	18	47
Avenir Beggen	22	14	3	5	65	21	45
Union	22	12	7	3	46	18	43
Grevenmacher	22	13	2	7	50	26	41
Sporting Mertzig	22	10	5	7	51	34	37
Mondercange	22	6	6	10	26	40	24
Aris Bonnevoie	22	7	3	12	26	51	24
Hobscheid	22	7	2	13	43	50	23
Wiltz 71	22	6	2	14	25	54	20
Petange	22	4	2	16	16	71	14
Spora	22	2	2	18	17	63	8

MALTA

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Valletta	27	23	1	3	71	23	70
Birkirkara	27	21	5	1	69	20	68
Sliema W	27	14	5	8	54	32	47
Hibernians	27	12	6	9	47	33	42
Floriana	27	10	6	11	47	50	36
Naxxar Lions	27	7	8	12	32	46	29
Pieta Hotspurs	27	7	6	14	39	39	27
Rabat Ajax	27	7	6	14	37	67	27
St Patrick	27	3	8	16	29	71	17
Hamrun Spartans	27	4	3	20	26	70	15

NORTHERN IRELAND

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Glentoran	36	24	6	6	74	35	78
Linfield	36	20	10	6	68	39	70
Crusaders	36	18	8	10	48	39	62
Newry Town	36	17	9	10	52	46	60
Glenavon	36	13	12	11	49	35	51
Ballymena Utd	36	11	8	17	40	42	41
Coleraine	36	10	9	17	34	53	39
Portadown	36	9	10	17	41	47	37
Cliftonville	36	7	14	15	31	47	35
Omagh Town	36	5	6	25	25	79	21

NORWAY

Apr 23: Brann 5 Kongsvinger 4; Molde 2 Bodo/Glimt 1; Odd Grenland 2 Skeid 1; Rosenborg 2 Tromso 2; Stabaek 3 Moss 1; Stromsgodset 0 Valerenga 3; Viking 2 Lillestrom 4.
May 2: Bodo/Glimt 1 Brann 3; Kongsvinger 0 Rosenborg 1; Lillestrom 1 Stabaek 2; Moss 1 Odd Grenland 0; Skeid 4 Stromsgodset 0; Tromso 1 Viking 3.
May 3: Valerenga 2 Molde 0.
May 8: Rosenborg 6 Bodo/Glimt 1.
May 9: Brann 2 Valerenga 1; Molde 3 Stromsgodset 0; Odd Grenland 0 Lillestrom 2; Skeid 0 Moss 6; Stabaek 1 Tromso 1; Viking 3 Kongsvinger 0.
May 12: Valerenga 0 Rosenborg 5.
May 13: Bodo/Glimt 3 Viking 3; Kongsvinger 1 Stabaek 3; Lillestrom 1 Moss 0; Molde 3 Skeid 0; Stromsgodset 1 Brann 2; Tromso 5 Odd Grenland 0.
May 16: Brann 0 Molde 1; Moss 2 Tromso 4; Odd Grenland 3 Kongsvinger 1; Rosenborg 3 Stromsgodset 1; Skeid 4 Lillestrom 4; Stabaek 3 Bodo/Glimt 2; Viking 2 Valerenga 0.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Molde	7	6	0	1	16	5	18
Rosenborg	7	5	1	1	24	7	16
Stabaek	7	5	1	1	19	9	16
Lillestrom	7	5	1	1	18	11	16
Viking	7	4	1	2	16	10	13
Brann	7	4	0	3	13	16	12
Odd Grenland	7	4	0	3	10	13	12
Tromso	7	3	2	2	18	12	11
Valerenga	7	3	1	3	9	10	10
Moss	7	2	0	5	10	15	6
Bodo/Glimt	7	1	2	4	12	19	5
Skeid	7	1	1	5	9	22	4
Stromsgodset	7	1	0	6	5	19	3
Kongsvinger	7	0	0	7	9	20	0

POLAND

Apr 23: Wisla 4 Katowice 1; Gornik 1 Lech 2.
Apr 24: Polonia 2 Widzew 1; Odra 0 Zaglebie 1; Pogon 2 Stomil 2; LKS 0 R Radzionkow 1; R Chorzow 0 Amica 0; Belchatow 1 Legia 2.
Apr 30: Katowice 0 Chorzow 1; Lech 2 Pogon 2; Legia 1 Wisla 2.
May 1: Widzew 1 Belchatow 0; Amica 1 LKS 2; R Radzionkow 0 Gornik 0; Stomil 3 Odra 1; Zaglebie 1 Polonia 0.
May 8: Zaglebie 0 Widzew 1; Polonia 0 Stomil 1; Odra 2 Lech 0; Pogon 3 R Radzionkow 2; Gornik 0 Amica 0; LKS 3 Katowice 2; R Chorzow 0 Legia 1; Wisla 4 Belchatow 0.
May 12: Widzew 1 Wisla 0; Belchatow 0 R Chorzow 2; Legia 3 LKS 2; Katowice 1 Gornik 1; Amica 2 Pogon 0; R Radzionkow 2 Odra 0; Lech 0 Polonia 1; Stomil 1 Zaglebie 1.
May 15: Zaglebie 1 Lech 2; Polonia 0 R Radzionkow 0; Odra 1 Amica 0; Gornik 1 Legia 0; LKS 2 Belchatow 0; R Chorzow 1 Wisla 1.
May 16: Stomil 2 Widzew 1; Pogon 1 Katowice 0.

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wisla	27	22	2	3	68	20	68
Widzew	27	17	1	9	44	30	52
Lech	27	16	2	9	51	31	50
Legia	27	13	8	6	34	24	47
Polonia	27	12	7	8	36	27	43
Gornik	27	9	10	8	30	26	37
R Radzionkow	27	9	9	9	33	31	36
Stomil	27	10	4	13	28	37	34
Zaglebie	27	8	9	10	36	39	33
LKS	27	8	8	11	32	39	32
R Chorzow	27	8	7	12	20	34	31
Odra	27	8	6	13	30	37	30
Amica	27	8	6	13	30	38	30
Pogon	27	8	6	13	32	48	30
Belchatow	27	7	5	15	24	45	26
Katowice	27	5	6	16	22	44	21

PORTUGAL

Friday, April 23

Vitoria Setubal 3 (Chiquinho 25, 60, Mamede 30)
Sporting Braga 0

Saturday, April 24

Academica 0
Uniao Leiria 1 (Konadu 90)

Beira Mar 1 (Simic 26)
Maritimo 1 (Bunbury pen 70)

Benfica 1 (Bruno Basto 48)
FC Porto 1 (Zahovic 40)

Campomaiorense 3 (Demetrios 72, 85, Miguel Serodio og 90)
Farense 1 (Mauro Soares og 79)

Estrela Amadora 1 (Lazaro 40)
Alverca 0

Sporting Lisbon 1 (Quim Berto 24)
Boavista 1 (Timofte 86)

Monday, April 26

Chaves 1 (Wanderley 54)
Salgueiros 1 (Celso 89)

Rio Ave 0
Guimaraes 1 (Evandro 72)

Friday, April 30

Boavista 2 (Rui Bento 22, Ayew 40)
Estrela Amadora 1 (Luis Manuel og 37)

Saturday, May 1

Guimaraes 3 (Edmilson 33, Gilmar 39, Tito 53)
Beira Mar 0

Uniao Leiria 0
Sporting Lisbon 3 (Simao 22, Duscher 59, Yordanov 64)

Sunday, May 2

Alverca 0
Rio Ave 1 (Andre Jacare 89)

Benfica 1 (Cadete 55)
Campomaiorense 1 (Wellington 72)

Maritimo 1 (Bunbury 39)
Farense 3 (Carlos Costa 45, Jean Paulista 75, 89)

FC Porto 6 (Capucho 3, Zahovic 10, Jardel 30, Aloisio 42, 57, Quinzinho 86)
Vitoria Setubal 0

Salgueiros 1 (Celso 85)
Academica 1 (Dario 45)

Sporting Braga 1 (Idalecio 44)
Chaves 0

Saturday, May 8

Academica 1 (Dario 8)
Sporting Braga 1 (Luis Carlos 4)

Chaves 0
FC Porto 4 (Zahovic 12, Jardel 27, 71, Aloisio 61)

Farense 1 (Hajry pen 66)
Guimaraes 2 (Riva 40, Evando 90)

Sunday, May 9

Beira Mar 2 (Sousa 32, Fary 59)
Alverca 1 (Filipe Azevedo 73)

Campomaiorense 0
Maritimo 2 (Eusebio 28, Mariano 49)

Estrela Amadora 1 (Jorge Andrade 90)
Uniao Leiria 1 (Bilro 87)

Rio Ave 0
Boavista 2 (Ayew 52, Timofte 75)

Sporting Lisbon 3 (Simao 29, 81, Yordanov 50)
Salgueiros 1 (Ademir 87)

Monday, May 10

Vitoria Setubal 1 (Tonito 12)
Benfica 0

Friday, May 14

Benfica 4 (El Khalej 42, Cadete 50, Poborsky 80, Nuno Gomes 90)
Chaves 1 (Alvarez 67)

Guimaraes 1 (Riva pen 24)
Maritimo 1 (Bunbury pen 90)

Saturday, May 15

Sporting Braga 2 (Silva 48, Karoglan 72)
Sporting Lisbon 0

Sunday, May 16

Alverca 1 (Filipe Azevedo pen 35)
Farense 3 (Jean Paulista 33, Marco Nuno 62, Ramos 89)

FC Porto 7 (Jardel 24, 37, 85, Esquerdinha 58, Chainho 66, Zahovic 74, Jorge Costa 82)
Academica 1 (To Sa 64)

Salgueiros 1 (Joao Pedro 85)
Estrela Amadora 1 (Lewis 21)

Uniao Leiria 2 (Joao Manuel 64, Ricardo Silva 66)
Rio Ave 0

Vitoria Setubal 2 (Chiquinho 21, 49)
Campomaiorense 0

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Porto	32	23	6	3	82	25	75
Boavista	31	19	10	2	52	24	67
Benfica	32	18	7	7	65	26	61
Sporting Lisbon	32	17	10	5	60	28	61
Uniao Leiria	32	13	9	10	33	27	48
Guimaraes	32	13	8	11	50	39	47
Vitoria Setubal	32	13	8	11	34	37	47
Estrela Amadora	32	11	11	10	33	38	44
Farense	32	10	8	14	36	50	38
Sporting Braga	32	9	11	12	36	50	38
Maritimo	32	9	10	13	39	41	37
Salgueiros	32	7	16	9	40	49	37
Campomaiorense	32	9	7	16	37	48	34
Rio Ave	32	7	11	14	24	44	32
Alverca	32	7	10	15	31	46	31
Beira Mar	31	6	13	12	30	46	31
Chaves	32	5	10	17	37	64	25
Academica	32	4	9	19	30	67	21

PORTUGUESE CUP – QUARTER-FINAL REPLAYS

Apr 21: Beira Mar 1 Moreirense 0.
Apr 28: Campomaiorense 0 Maritimo 0
Campomaiorense won on pens; Vitoria Setubal 3 Torreense 0.

SEMI-FINALS

May 5: Beira Mar 1 Vitoria Setubal 0; Esposende 0 Campomaiorense 2.

REP OF IRELAND

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
St Patrick's Ath	33	22	7	4	58	21	73
Cork City	33	21	7	5	62	25	70
Shelbourne	33	13	8	12	37	35	47
Finn Harps	33	12	10	11	38	39	46
Derry City	33	12	9	12	34	32	45
Univ Coll Dublin	33	10	12	11	31	32	42
Waterford United	33	11	9	13	21	37	42
Shamrock Rovers	33	9	13	11	34	40	40
Sligo Rovers	33	9	11	13	37	50	38
Bohemians	33	10	7	16	28	37	37
Bray Wanderers	33	8	8	17	30	45	32
Dundalk	33	6	9	18	23	40	27

ROMANIA

Apr 21: Astra 1 National 2; U Craiova 1 Foresta 0; Resita 2 Petrolul 1; Arges 2 Gloria 1; Onesti 1 Otelul 0; Olimpia 0 Farul 3; Rapid 4 Ceahlaul 0; Steaua 2 Bacau 1; U Cluj 0 Dinamo 6.
Apr 24: Ceahlaul 4 Resita 0; Dinamo 1 Arges 0; Farul 2 Bacau 0; Foresta 1 U Cluj 0; Gloria 3 Onesti 1; National 1 U Craiova 0; Olimpia 1 Astra 2; Petrolul 2 Steaua 1.
Apr 25: Otelul 0 Rapid 1.
May 1: Astra 4 Farul 0; U Craiova 5 Olimpia 1; Resita 2 Otelul 3; Arges 1 Foresta 1; Onesti 1 Dinamo 4; Bacau 3 Petrolul 1; Rapid 5 Gloria 0; Steaua 3 Ceahlaul 2.
May 2: U Cluj 1 National 4.
May 7: Olimpia 0 U Cluj 1.
May 8: Astra 2 U Craiova 2; Ceahlaul 4 Bacau 1; Farul 1 Petrolul 0; Foresta 3 Onesti 1; Gloria 2 Resita 2; National 2 Arges 3; Otelul 2 Steaua 0.
May 9: Dinamo 0 Rapid 1.
May 12: U Craiova 1 Farul 0; Resita 1 Dinamo 1; Arges 3 Olimpia 1; Onesti 2 National 3; Bacau 1 Otelul 1; Petrolul 1 Ceahlaul 0; Rapid 2 Foresta 0; Steaua 0 Gloria 0; U Cluj 0 Astra 2.
May 15: Astra 0 Arges 1; U Craiova 4 U Cluj 1; Dinamo 0 Steaua 0; Farul 2 Ceahlaul 1; Foresta 0 Resita 0; Gloria 2 Bacau 0; National 1 Rapid 3; Olimpia 1 Onesti 6; Otelul 0 Petrolul 1.

ROMANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rapid	30	24	5	1	68	16	77
Dinamo	30	23	4	3	88	24	73
Steaua	30	16	8	6	51	29	56
Arges	30	17	4	9	50	35	55
National	30	17	1	12	57	42	52
Otelul	30	16	3	11	44	29	51
Bacau	30	14	9	7	39	33	51
Petrolul	30	14	5	11	44	39	47
Astra	30	12	6	12	37	30	42
Ceahlaul	30	13	3	14	48	48	42
Farul	30	11	4	15	31	45	37
U Craiova	30	10	6	14	39	44	36
Gloria	30	10	6	14	46	53	36
Onesti	30	10	3	17	46	61	33
Resita	30	5	11	14	26	56	26
Foresta	30	6	6	18	29	50	24
Olimpia	30	3	4	23	19	65	13
U Cluj	30	3	4	23	15	78	13

ROMANIAN CUP – SEMI-FINALS

1st legs
Dinamo 1 Steaua 2; Rapid 1 Bacau 0.

RUSSIA

Apr 21: Spartak 0 Torpedo 1.
Apr 25: Chernomorets 3 Zhemchuzhina 0; Dinamo 2 Lokomotiv NN 1; Kryliya Sovetov 1 Torpedo 2; Alaniya 3 Rostselmash 1; Uralan 0 Rotor 1; Shinnik 0 CSKA 0; Zenit 1 Spartak 2.
Apr 26: Lokomotiv M 3 Saturn 0.
May 2: Spartak 2 Chernomorets 0; CSKA 2 Zenit 2; Rotor 2 Shinnik 0; Rostselmash 2 Uralan 0; Torpedo 1 Alaniya 1; Lokomotiv NN 3 Kryliya Sovetov 0; Saturn 3 Dinamo 3; Zhemchuzhina 1 Lokomotiv M 4.
May 5: Spartak 3 Saturn 1.
May 9: Chernomorets 1 Lokomotiv M 4; Dinamo 3 Zhemchuzhina 0; Kryliya Sovetov 2 Saturn 0; Alaniya 5 Lokomotiv NN 2; Uralan 1 Torpedo 1; Shinnik 0 Rostselmash 3; Zenit 1 Rotor 1; Spartak 1 CSKA 0.
May 15: CSKA 5 Chernomorets 2; Rotor 3 Spartak 3; Rostselmash 2 Zenit 1; Torpedo 0 Shinnik 0; Lokomotiv NN 1 Uralan 2; Saturn 0 Alaniya 1; Zhemchuzhina 0 Kryliya Sovetov 2; Lokomotiv M 2 Dinamo 1.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spartak	10	8	1	1	20	7	25
Dinamo	7	5	1	1	16	7	16
Torpedo	8	4	3	1	8	5	15
Lokomotiv M	7	4	2	1	15	6	14
Alaniya	7	4	1	2	12	6	13
Rostselmash	7	4	1	2	11	10	13
CSKA	7	3	3	1	11	6	12
Rotor	7	3	2	2	9	8	11
Saturn	8	2	2	4	9	13	8
Zenit	7	1	4	2	8	8	7
Kryliya Sovetov	8	2	1	5	7	12	7
Shinnik	7	1	3	3	2	9	6
Lokomotiv NN	7	1	2	4	8	11	5
Chernomorets	7	1	2	4	8	14	5
Uralan	7	1	1	5	3	10	4
Zhemchuzhina	7	0	1	6	2	17	1

SAN MARINO

GROUP A – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Folgore	22	12	7	3	52	30	43
Domagnano	22	12	6	4	44	28	42
Cosmos	22	12	5	5	38	22	41
Tre Fiori	22	10	6	6	45	34	36
Fiorita	22	10	4	8	29	32	34
Pennarossa	22	8	5	9	42	50	29
Montevito	22	7	6	9	32	37	27
San Giovanni	22	3	6	12	21	47	15

GROUP B – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Murata	22	17	2	3	61	34	53
Tre Penne	22	11	6	5	51	41	39
Faetano	22	11	5	6	32	16	38
Virtus	22	8	4	10	46	37	28
Dogana	22	5	6	11	21	33	21
Juvenes	22	4	5	13	20	40	17
Libertas	22	2	6	14	25	57	12
Cailungo	22	2	5	15	22	43	11

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFFS

Apr 14: Domagnano 1 Faetano 0; Tre Penne 1 Cosmos 3.
Apr 17: Folgore 2 Cosmos 1; Murata 2 Domagnano 3.
Apr 22: Murata 2 Tre Penne 3; Cosmos 1 Faetano 2.

SEMI-FINALS

Apr 23: Domagnano 3-3 Folgore 3
Folgore won 7-6 on pens.
May 1: Tre Penne 1 Faetano 2.

FINAL

May 11: Faetano 1 Folgore 0.

SCOTLAND

Tuesday, April 20

Dundee Utd 0
St Johnstone 1 (Griffin 42) Att: 6,741

Saturday, April 24

Dundee 2 (Anderson 44, McSkimming 64)
Kilmarnock 1 (Innes 53) Att: 4,296

Dunfermline 2 (Millar pen 46, Smith 54)
Dundee Utd 2 (Dodds 13, pen 18) Att: 6,190

Motherwell 0
Hearts 4 (Jackson 21, Adam 46, 59, Cameron 90) Att: 8,926

St Johnstone 1 (O'Halloran 55)
Celtic 0 Att: 10,379

Sunday, April 25

Rangers 3 (Amato pen 27, Kanchelskis 55, Wallace 60)
Aberdeen 1 (Perry 19) Att: 49,145

Saturday, May 1

Aberdeen 1 (Winters 67)
St Johnstone 0 Att: 9,561

Dundee Utd 0
Dundee 2 (Irvine 67, Grady 90) Att: 12,280

Kilmarnock 0
Motherwell 1 (Brannan 53) Att: 8,867

Celtic 0
Rangers 3 (McCann 12, 76, Albertz pen 44) Att: 59,918

Monday, May 3

Hearts 2 (Cameron 55, 81)
Dunfermline 0 Att: 15,167

Saturday, May 8

Aberdeen 1 (Winters 90)
Dundee 2 (Boyack 41, Anderson 86) Att: 9,790

Dundee Utd 0
Kilmarnock 0 Att: 7,190

Dunfermline 1 (Coyle 83)
Celtic 2 (Johnson 2, 44) Att: 8,809

St Johnstone 0
Motherwell 0 Att: 4,559

Sunday, May 9

Rangers 0
Hearts 0 Att: 49,495

Saturday, May 15

Celtic 3 (Blinker 1, Johnson 60, Burchill 88)
Aberdeen 2 (Mayer 55, Perry 81) Att: 59,138

Dundee 3 (Irvine 22, Boyack 50, Falconer 61)
Dunfermline 1 (Thomson 49) Att: 4,179

Hearts 4 (Ritchie 41, McSwegan 50, Adam 67, Cameron 77)
Dundee Utd 1 (Eustace 90) Att: 13,187

Kilmarnock 1 (Roberts 8)
St Johnstone 1 (Bollan 66) Att: 15,086

Motherwell 1 (Nicholas 74)
Rangers 5 (Amato 16, 51, pen 54, Van Bronckhorst 37, Kanchelskis 65) Att: 11,078

Saturday, May 22

Aberdeen 2 (Buchan 7, Jess 61)
Hearts 5 (McSwegan 2, 47, 49, Cameron pen 52, Flogel 64) Att: 13,042

Dundee Utd 1 (Dodds pen 59)
Celtic 2 (Burchill 34,35) Att: 10,062

Dunfermline 1 (Boyle 20)
Motherwell 2 (Goodman 76, Ramsey 90) Att: 3,532

Rangers 1 (Amato 5)
Kilmarnock 1 (McGowne 41) Att: 48,835

St Johnstone 1 (Kane 71)
Dundee 0 Att: 10,575

SCOTLAND – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	36	23	8	5	78	31	77
Celtic	36	21	8	7	84	35	71
St Johnstone	36	15	12	9	39	38	57
Kilmarnock	36	14	14	8	47	29	56
Dundee	36	13	7	16	36	55	46
Hearts	36	11	9	16	44	50	42
Motherwell	36	10	11	15	35	54	41
Aberdeen	36	10	7	19	43	71	37
Dundee Utd	36	8	10	18	36	48	34
Dunfermline	36	4	16	16	28	59	28

SPAIN

Saturday, April 24

Valencia 2 (Vlaovic 11, Farinos 90)
Celta Vigo 2 (Sanchez 39, Karpin 89) Att: 45,000

Sunday, April 25

Alaves 2 (Gerard 60, Sivori 90)
Villarreal 1 (Albelda 73) Att: 18,000

Atletico Madrid 1 (Valeron 55)
Barcelona 1 (Abelardo 64) Att: 55,000

Espanyol 0
Extremadura 0 Att: 17,400

La Coruna 3 (Marcos og 41, Turu Flores 44, Ziani 80)
Valladolid 0 Att: 20,000

Mallorca 6 (Biagini 2, 41, 46, Ibagaza 55, Marcelino 62, Dani 85)
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Larrazabal pen 60) Att: 14,400

Oviedo 1 (Dely Valdes 90)
Zaragoza 2 (Bango og 79, Milosevic 83) Att: 10,067

Real Sociedad 2 (Kovacevic 66, 88)
Racing Santander 0 Att: 23,387

Salamanca 1 (Korino 55)
Real Madrid 1 (Raul 48) Att: 15,000

Tenerife 3 (Jokanovic pen 8, Mista 48, Makaay 67)
Betis Sevilla 2 (Filipescu 25, Alexis 35) Att: 17,000

Saturday, May 1

Real Madrid 2 (Morientes 10, 30)
Espanyol 0 Att: 45,000

Valencia 5 (Claudio Lopez 18, 56, 71, Mendieta 33, 81)
Alaves 0 Att: 45,000

Sunday, May 2

Athletic Bilbao 1 (Guerrero 18)
Atletico Madrid 2 (Juninho 45, Mena 75) Att: 36,000

Barcelona 4 (Kluivert 14, Figo 39, Luis Enrique 45, Rivaldo 78)
La Coruna 0 Att: 80,000

Betis Sevilla 1 (Oli 49)
Mallorca 3 (Stankovic 12, Ibagaza 65, Paunovic 74) Att: 35,000

Celta Vigo 1 (Revivo 62)
Salamanca 0 Att: 21,000

Extremadura 1 (Velamazan 26)
Real Sociedad 0 Att: 9,000

Racing Santander 0
Oviedo 0 Att: 19,000

Valladolid 1 (Victor 51)
Villarreal 0 Att: 16,500

Zaragoza 3 (Aguado 43, Yordi 76, Milosevic 87)
Tenerife 1 (Ballesteros 20) Att: 20,000

Saturday, May 8

Real Sociedad 3 (Idiakez 32, De Pedro pen 45, Kovacevic 75)
Real Madrid 2 (Guti 46, Savio pen 52) Att: 29,000

Sunday, May 9

Alaves 2 (Gerard 8, 85)
Valladolid 0 Att: 18,000

Atletico Madrid 2 (Gonzalez 24, Baraja 30)
Betis Sevilla 3 (Oli 64, Finidi pen 72, 77) Att: 45,000

Espanyol 3 (De Lucas 59, Galca pen 74, Tamudo 77)
Celta Vigo 0 Att: 25,600

La Coruna 1 (Donato 84)
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Guerrero 25) Att: 25,000

Mallorca 1 (Biagini pen 42)
Zaragoza 0 Att: 15,000

Oviedo 1 (Dubovsky 88)
Extremadura 0 Att: 10,204

Salamanca 0
Valencia 1 (Vlaovic 23) Att: 15,200

Tenerife 2 (Mista 12, Pier 90)
Racing Santander 2 (Salva 60, Amavisca 67) Att: 16,000

Villarreal 2 (Alfaro 26, Moises 72)
Barcelona 3 (Kluivert 45, Cocu 56, Rivaldo 78) Att: 40,000

Friday, May 14

Racing Santander 1 (Ismael 64)
Mallorca 0 Att: 14,993

Saturday, May 15

Barcelona 1 (Luis Enrique 63)
Valladolid 1 (Lozano 83) Att: 70,000

Sunday, May 16

Athletic Bilbao 2 (Guerrero 5, Ezquerro 25)
Villarreal 0 Att: 32,000

Betis Sevilla 0
La Coruna 3 (Pauleta 25, 46, Flavio Conceicao 41) Att: 35,000

Celta Vigo 2 (Karpin 35, Tomas 69)
Real Sociedad 2 (Kovacevic pen 10, Idiakez 15) Att: 22,000

Extremadura 1 (Viaud 46)
Tenerife 0 Att: 10,900

Real Madrid 2 (Morientes 37, 64)
Oviedo 1 (Dely Valdes 6) Att: 50,000

Salamanca 1 (Silvani 43)
Alaves 0 Att: 12,000

Valencia 1 (Claudio Lopez 89)
Espanyol 2 (Tamudo 71, Posse 87) Att: 45,000

Zaragoza 2 (Gustavo Lopez 28, Yordi 71)
Atletico Madrid 0 Att: 22,000

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	34	21	7	6	76	38	70
Mallorca	34	18	6	10	43	26	60
Real Madrid	34	18	5	11	68	55	59
Celta Vigo	34	15	13	6	64	37	58
Valencia	34	17	7	10	54	35	58
La Coruna	34	16	10	8	50	37	58
Athletic Bilbao	34	14	9	11	40	43	51
Zaragoza	34	14	8	12	49	43	50
Real Sociedad	34	13	11	10	43	38	50
Espanyol	34	12	13	9	38	36	49
Valladolid	34	12	8	14	32	38	44
Betis Sevilla	34	12	7	15	39	47	43
Oviedo	34	10	12	12	36	47	42
Racing Santander	34	10	10	14	39	46	40
Atletico Madrid	34	10	9	15	48	46	39
Alaves	34	10	7	17	33	50	37
Extremadura	34	8	10	16	22	47	34
Villarreal	34	7	11	16	39	53	32
Tenerife	34	5	13	16	34	55	28
Salamanca	34	7	6	21	26	56	27

SWEDEN

Apr 20: Malmo 2 AIK 1.
Apr 21: Hammarby 2 Helsingborgs 1.
Apr 22: Halmstads 1 Vastra Frolunda 2; IFK Gothenburg 0 Djurgardens 0.
Apr 24: Orgryte 4 Malmo 4.
Apr 25: Halmstads 1 Norrkoping 1; Helsingborgs 4 Djurgardens 1; Trelleborgs 3 IFK Gothenburg 1; Elfsborg 3 Hammarby 0; AIK 4 Kalmar 0; Vastra Frolunda 2 Orebro 0.
May 2: Malmo 0 Halmstads 1; Kalmar 3 Vastra Frolunda 1.
May 3: Djurgardens 2 Trelleborgs 2; Orebro 0 Orgryte 1; Norrkoping 1 Helsingborgs 0; IFK Gothenburg 2 Elfsborg 0.
May 4: Hammarby 0 AIK 2.
May 9: Halmstads 3 Hammarby 1; Kalmar 1 Malmo 0; Orebro 2 Norrkoping 1.
May 10: Vastra Frolunda 1 Djurgardens 1; AIK 2 Helsingborgs 1; Trelleborgs 2 Elfsborg 1.
May 11: Orgryte 2 IFK Gothenburg 2.
May 16: Norrkoping 1 Elfsborg 1; Kalmar 2 Orebro 0.
May 17: Trelleborgs 1 AIK 0; Djurgardens 0 Orgryte 3; IFK Gothenburg 1 Halmstads 1; Helsingborgs 1 Vastra Frolunda 0.
May 18: Hammarby 0 Malmo 1.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Orgryte	6	4	2	0	13	6	14
Kalmar	6	4	0	2	9	10	12
Trelleborgs	6	3	2	1	12	9	11
AIK	6	3	1	2	10	5	10
Vastra Frolunda	6	3	1	2	8	7	10
Helsingborgs	6	3	0	3	10	7	9
Halmstads	6	2	2	2	7	6	8
Elfsborg	5	2	1	2	8	5	7
Malmo	6	2	1	3	8	9	7
IFK Gothenburg	6	1	3	2	7	9	6
Djurgardens	6	1	3	2	7	10	6
Norrkoping	6	1	2	3	4	9	5
Orebro	5	1	1	3	3	7	4
Hammarby	6	1	1	4	5	12	4

SWEDISH CUP – QTR-FINALS

Helsingborgs 2 Orgryte 1; Ludvika 0 Malmo 5; Norrkoping 0 IFK Gothenburg 3; AIK 1 Trelleborgs 0 (aet).

SEMI-FINALS

Apr 30: AIK 2 Helsingborgs 1.
May 5: Malmo 1 IFK Gothenburg 2 (aet).

FINAL – 1ST LEG

Friday, May 14

AIK 1 (Englund 84)
IFK Gothenburg 0 Att: 9,141

SWITZERLAND

CHAMPIONSHIP POOL

Friday, April 23

Grasshopper 5 (Magnin 12, Kavelashvili 31, Tikva 47, Comisetti 57, Vogel 69)
Lausanne 0 Att: 8,200

Saturday, April 24

Lucerne 1 (Koumantarakis 86)
Zurich 3 (Bartlett 33, Kunz 42, Lima 62) Att: 4,950

Servette 1 (Vurens 21)
Neuchatel Xamax 2 (Boughanem 29, Isabella 79) Att: 5,124

Sunday, April 25

St Gallen 1 (Damasio 71)
Basle 2 (Frick 74, Perez 90) Att: 7,800

Saturday, May 1

Lausanne 3 (Puce 13, Barberis og 31, Gerber 67)
Basle 0 Att: 6,100

Neuchatel Xamax 1 (Bieli 79)
Zurich 3 (Bartlett 12, 54, 60) Att: 6,800

Servette 1 (Rey 20)
Lucerne 0 Att: 4,815

Sunday, May 2

Grasshopper 4 (Kavelashvili 34, 58, Smiljanic 56, Tikva pen 68)
St Gallen 0 Att: 7,200

Saturday, May 8

Basle 2 (Dos Santos 54, Tschopp 90)
Grasshopper 0 Att: 5,460

Lucerne 2 (Wyss 61, Kogl pen 79)
Neuchatel Xamax 0 Att: 3,200

St Gallen 0
Lausanne 0 Att: 5,200

Zurich 4 (Nixon 10, Hodel 53, Lima 57, Chassot 70)
Servette 0 Att: 5,400

Saturday, May 15

Lucerne 2 (Koumantarakis 12, Joller 57)
St Gallen 1 (Francisco 81) Att: 4,700

Neuchatel Xamax 1 (N'Diaye 62)
Lausanne 1 (Thurre 63) Att: 7,100

Servette 0
Grasshopper 0 Att: 9,218

Sunday, May 16

Zurich 2 (Castillo 78, Bartlett 83)
Basle 1 (Frick 33) Att: 12,300

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Grasshopper	11	6	3	2	22	8	40
Servette	11	5	2	4	12	12	39
Lausanne	11	6	2	3	20	14	39
Zurich	11	5	2	4	19	13	36
Basle	11	5	1	5	16	17	30
Lucerne	11	4	1	6	10	18	27
Neuchatel Xamax	11	2	4	5	11	21	26
St Gallen	11	2	3	6	12	20	23

SWISS CUP – QUARTER-FINALS

May 5: Delemont 1 Lausanne 2; Lucerne 1 Grasshopper 2; Red Star 2 Lugano 1; Sion 1 Servette 2.

TURKEY

Apr 23: Besiktas 0 Samsunspor 0.
Apr 24: Gaziantepspor 2 Fenerbahce 2.
Apr 25: Sakaryaspor 4 Karabukspor 0; Ankaragucu 3 Adanaspor 1; Altay 3 Erzurum 1; Bursaspor 2 Istanbulspor 0; Dardanelspor 3 Kocaelispor 1; Trabzonspor 0 Galatasaray 3; Antalyaspor 1 Genclerbirligi 1.
Apr 30: Galatasaray 3 Sakaryaspor 0.
May 1: Karabukspor 1 Besiktas 2.
May 2: Genclerbirligi 3 Gaziantepspor 0; Adanaspor 4 Antalyaspor 2; Istanbulspor 2 Kocaelispor 1; Erzurum 2 Bursaspor 1; Samsunspor 0 Ankaragucu 0; Trabzonspor 2 Dardanelspor 1; Fenerbahce 5 Altay 0.
May 7: Antalyaspor 1 Samsunspor 2.
May 8: Bursaspor 1 Fenerbahce 3.
May 9: Sakaryaspor 1 Trabzonspor 1; Besiktas 1 Galatasaray 1; Kocaelispor 1 Erzurum 1; Dardanelspor 5 Istanbulspor 1; Ankaragucu 1 Karabukspor 1; Gaziantepspor 3 Adanaspor 1; Altay 0 Genclerbirligi 0.
May 14: Galatasaray 2 Ankaragucu 1.
May 15: Fenerbahce 1 Kocaelispor 1.
May 16: Trabzonspor 1 Besiktas 2; Genclerbirligi 1 Bursaspor 4; Karabukspor 2 Antalyaspor 1; Dardanelspor 1 Sakaryaspor 0; Adanaspor 2 Altay 0; Samsunspor 2 Gaziantepspor 1; Istanbulspor 0 Erzurum 2.

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Galatasaray	32	23	7	2	84	29	76
Besiktas	32	21	8	3	52	26	71
Fenerbahce	32	20	6	6	78	27	66
Trabzonspor	32	17	7	8	46	33	58
Antalyaspor	32	13	6	13	42	43	44
Genclerbirligi	32	12	10	10	47	42	46
Kocaelispor	32	13	7	12	41	36	46
Gaziantepspor	32	11	11	10	47	46	44
Istanbulspor	32	11	7	14	44	51	40
Samsunspor	32	11	7	14	37	50	40
Ankaragucu	32	10	7	15	45	50	37
Bursaspor	32	11	4	17	49	67	37
Altay	32	10	6	16	42	58	36
Erzurum	32	9	9	14	38	59	36
Adanaspor	32	10	5	17	34	52	35
Sakaryaspor	32	8	8	16	40	49	32
Dardanelspor	32	8	8	16	34	45	32
Karabukspor	32	5	7	20	22	59	22

TURKISH CUP – FINAL

Friday, April 16

Galatasaray 0
Besiktas 0

Wednesday, May 5

Besiktas 0
Galatasaray 2 (Umit 51, 67) Att: 25,000
Galatasaray won 2-0 on agg

UKRAINE

Apr 24: Dnipro 1 Shakhtar 2; Metalurh Z 3 Karpaty 1; Kryvbas 3 Metalurh M 1; Metalurh D 0 Mykolaiv 0; Vorskla 1 Metalist 2; Zirka 1 Nyva 0; CSKA 3 Tavriya 0.
Apr 25: Prykarpattya 1 Dynamo 0.
May 2: Shakhtar 1 CSKA 0; Metalurh Z 1 Dynamo 3; Karpaty 2 Vorskla 1; Metalurh M 2 Prykarpattya 1; Mykolaiv 0 Kryvbas 4; Tavriya 3 Metalurh D 2; Metalist 3 Zirka 0; Nyva 0 Dnipro 0.
May 9: Metalurh Z 3 Metalurh M 0; Prykarpattya 2 Mykolaiv 1; Kryvbas 1 Tavriya 1; Dnipro 0 Metalist 0; CSKA 2 Metalurh D 1.
May 10: Vorskla 0 Dynamo 2; Shakhtar 1 Nyva 1; Zirka 2 Karpaty 2.
May 14: Dynamo 1 Zirka 0; Metalist 1 Shakhtar 1; Mykolaiv 0 Metalurh Z 4; Tavriya 3 Prykarpattya 0; Metalurh D 0 Kryvbas 2; Nyva 1 CSKA 2; Metalurh M 1 Vorskla 0.
May 18: Metalurh Z 3 Tavriya 0; Prykarpattya 2 Metalurh D 1; CSKA 1 Kryvbas 2; Vorskla 2 Mykolaiv 1; Zirka 0 Metalurh M 1; Dnipro 0 Dynamo 1; Shakhtar 1 Karpaty 1; Nyva 2 Metalist 0.

UKRAINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dynamo	24	19	4	1	60	14	61
Shakhtar	26	17	4	5	64	25	55
Kryvbas	26	13	10	3	34	14	49
Karpaty	25	12	9	4	41	26	45
Metalurh M	25	12	5	8	32	24	41
Metalist	26	12	5	9	27	29	41
CSKA	24	10	8	6	31	24	38
Metalurh Z	25	11	3	11	41	39	36
Tavriya	26	8	7	11	26	33	31
Nyva	26	8	6	12	25	32	30
Zirka	25	8	6	11	22	29	30
Vorskla	25	7	4	14	24	36	25
Metalurh D	26	6	7	13	26	42	25
Dnipro	24	6	4	14	17	36	22
Prykarpattya	26	5	5	16	22	50	20
Mykolaiv	25	2	5	18	13	52	11

WALES

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barry Town	32	23	7	2	82	23	76
Inter Cable-Tel	32	19	6	7	61	26	63
Cwmbran Town	32	17	6	9	72	44	57
Aberystwyth T	32	16	9	7	59	48	57
Caernarfon T	32	13	11	8	45	46	50
Newtown	32	13	10	9	45	35	49
Conwy United	32	14	7	11	55	49	49
Llansantffraid	32	12	11	9	55	42	47
Carmarthen T	32	13	8	11	46	46	47
Caersws	32	12	8	12	49	56	44
Bangor City	32	11	6	15	44	49	39
Connah's Quay	32	10	8	14	44	47	38
Haverfordwest	32	9	7	15	43	60	34
Afan Lido	32	7	10	15	28	45	31
Rhayader Town	32	5	11	16	30	54	26
Rhyl	32	7	2	23	41	81	23
Holywell Town	32	3	9	20	38	86	18

YUGOSLAVIA

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Partizan	24	21	3	0	59	11	66
Obilic	24	20	4	0	61	9	64
Red Star	24	15	6	3	54	18	51
Vojvodina	24	13	3	8	45	22	42
Rad	24	11	7	6	26	26	40
Proleter	24	10	5	9	29	29	35
Hajduk Kula	24	9	5	10	27	28	32
OFK	24	8	7	9	35	39	31
Sartid	24	7	9	8	24	27	30
Radnicki K	24	9	3	12	33	43	30
Milicionar	24	8	5	11	39	39	29
Zemun	24	9	1	14	30	47	28
Zeleznik	24	7	5	12	29	43	26
Buducnost	24	7	5	12	28	42	26
Mogren	24	4	8	12	18	42	20
Radnicki N	24	4	7	13	21	44	19
Pristina	24	5	3	16	25	49	18
Spartak	24	6	0	18	33	58	18

League ended for security reasons with 10 games to play.

SOUTH AMERICA

LIBERTADORES CUP

SECOND ROUND – 2ND LEGS

Apr 20 – Santiago
Universidad Catolica (Chl) 1 (Figueroa 67)
Bella Vista Montevideo (Uru) 3 (Garcia 36, Lemos 71, Alonso 83)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Ortube (Bol)
Univ Catolica: Tapia, Romero, Ramirez, Vargas, Ribera (Brizuela), Lepe, Ormazabal, Rios (Osorio), Carracedo, Figueroa, Tapia.
Bella Vista: Berdia, Rosamundo, Pilipaukas, Pumar, Lembo, Moran, Casanova, Lemos, Ortiz (Lopez), Alonso, Garcia (Giacomasi).
Bella Vista won 5-3 on agg

Apr 20 – Montevideo
Nacional (Uru) 2 (Sosa 25, Alvez 86)
Cerro Porteno (Par) 1 (Fernandez 46)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Aros (Chl)
Nacional: Romay, Del Campo, Rodriguez, Jorgeao, Bergara (Regueiro 45), Camejo, Scotti (Morales 58), Nunez (Coelho 61), Sosa, Alvez, Delgado.
Cerro Porteno: Aceval, Recalde, Peralta, Blanco, Toledo, Gomez, Gavilan (Aguilera 82), Campos (Escobar 75), Alvarenga, M Caballero (Lopez 80), Fernandez.
Cerro Porteno won 6-2 on agg

Apr 21 – Merida
Estudiantes (Ven) 0
Emelec (Ecu) 1 (Moreira 36)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 14,000. **Ref:** Arana (Per)
Estudiantes won 3-2 on agg

Apr 21 – Rio de Janeiro
Vasco da Gama (Bra) 2 (Luizao 3, Ramon 34)
Palmeiras (Bra) 4 (Paulo Nunes 29, Alex 31, 47, Arce 50)
HT: 2-2.
Palmeiras won 5-3 on agg

Apr 21 – Buenos Aires
Velez Sarsfield (Arg) 4 (Chilavert pen 6, Camps 43, D Husain 80, 85)
Universitario (Per) 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Godoi (Bra)
Velez Sarsfield: Chilavert, Zandona, Mendez, Sotomayor, E Dominguez (F Dominguez 86), C Husain, Cubero, Falcon, Bassedas (Ramirez 88), D Husain, Camps.
Universitario: Ibanez, Guadalupe, Araujo, Pajuelo, Arraiga, Ciurlizza, Carranza, Gomez, Guzman (Maldonado 56), Coria (Esidio 61), Cornelio.
Sent off: Carranza 53mins, Gomez 87mins.
Velez Sarsfield won 4-0 on agg

Apr 21 – Sao Paulo
Corinthians (Bra) 5 (Edilson 31, Dinei 45, 81, Nene 59, 86)
Jorge Wilstermann (Bol) 2 (Villaroel 72, Cardenas 82)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 37,200. **Ref:** Aquino (Par)
Corinthians: Nei, Rodrigo (Andre Santos 45), Gamarra, Nene, Silvinho, Amaral, Vampeta, Ricardinho, Marcelinho Carioca, Edilson, Dinei.
Jorge Wilstermann: Soria, Sozzani, Carballo, Carvalho, Loayza (Morejon 38), Galindo (Arevalo 78), Cardenas, Reynoso, Villaroel, Zamora, Sergio Joao.
Sent off: Reynoso 46mins.
Corinthians won 6-3 on agg

Apr 21 – Quito
LDU Quito (Ecu) 1 (Capurro 88)
River Plate (Arg) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Da Rosa (Uru)
LDU Quito: Espinosa, De la Cruz, Jacome, Capurro, Reasco, Gonzalez, Obregon (Guaman 63), Benalcazar (Hurtado 70), Escobar, Perez, Maggiolo.
River Plate: Bonano, Lombardi, Ramos, Sarabia, Berizzo, Sorin, Netto, Astrada, Berti, Castillo (Gancedo 70), Angel (Placente 84).
Aggregate 1-1. River Plate won 5-4 on pens

Apr 22 – Santiago
Colo Colo (Chl) 1 (Montecinos 48)
Deportivo Cali (Col) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000.
Deportivo Cali won 2-1 on agg

QUARTER-FINALS – 1ST LEGS

May 5 – Buenos Aires
River Plate (Arg) 2 (Sorin 32, Saviola 71)
Velez Sarsfield (Arg) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** Elizondo (Arg)
River Plate: Bonano, Lombardi, Ramos, Sarabia, Sorin, Netto, Astrada, Berti (Gancedo 86), Gallardo (Placente 60), Saviola (Castillo 82), Angel.
Velez Sarsfield: Chilavert, Zandona, Sotomayor, Mendez, Cardozo, C Husain, Cubero, Morigi (Falcon 60), Bassedas, Pandolfi, Camps (D Husain 46).
Sent off: Cubero 74mins.

May 5 – Sao Paulo
Palmeiras (Bra) 2 (Oseas 20, Rogerio 68)
Corinthians (Bra) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** De Oliveira (Bra)
Palmeiras: Marcos, Arce, Junior Baiano, Cleber, Rubens Junior, Galeano, Cesar Sampaio, Alex (Rogerio 55), Zinho, Paulo Nunes (Jackson 85), Oseas (Evair 61).
Corinthians: Nei, Indio (Rodrigo 82), Nene, Gamarra, Silvinho, Amaral, Vampeta, Ricardinho (Dinei 60), Marcelinho Carioca, Edilson, Fernando Baiano.

May 5 – Merida
Estudiantes (Ven) 3 (Echenausi 25, Raices 45, Moran 90)
Cerro Porteno (Par) 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Hidalgo (Per)
Estudiantes: Golindano, Vallenilla, Vergara, Rojas (Castro 68), Cardarelli, Echenausi, Aguirre (Carneiro 83), Vera, Paez, Moran, Raices (Mascote 68).
Cerro Porteno: Aceval, Blanco, Lopez, Recalde, Toledo, Gavilan, Escobar, Campos (D Caballero 46), Alvarenga, Gauchinho (Espinoza 87), M Caballero (Fernandez 66). *Sent off: Lopez 34mins.*

May 5 – Cali
Deportivo Cali (Col) 2 (Zapata 40, Bonilla 63)
Bella Vista Montevideo (Uru) 1 (Pumar 10)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 18,000.

QUARTER-FINALS – 2ND LEGS

May 12 – Buenos Aires
Velez Sarsfield (Arg) 1 (Bassedas 72)
River Plate (Arg) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Sanchez (Arg)
Velez Sarsfield: Chilavert, Castroman (Ramirez), Mendez, Sotomayor, Cardozo, C Husain, Falcon, Morigi (Cordone), Bassedas, Pandolfi, D Husain.
River Plate: Bonano, Lombardi, Ramos, Berizzo, Placente, Netto (Diaz), Astrada, Gallardo, Berti, Castillo (Sorin), Saviola. *Sent off: Ramos 83mins.*
River Plate won 2-1 on agg

May 12 – Asuncion
Cerro Porteno (Par) 4 (Caballero 26, Blanco 47, Gauchinho 67, Aceval pen 86)
Estudiantes (Ven) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Rezende (Bra)
Cerro Porteno: Aceval, Recalde, Blanco, Peralta, Gavilan, Toledo, Aguilera (Escobar), Alvarenga, Campos (Lopez), Gauchinho, Caballero.
Estudiantes: Golindano, Pacheco, Vergara, Gardarelli, Echenausi, Merillo, Vera, Aguirre (Diaz), Paez, Raicas (Rojas), Moran.
Cerro Porteno won 4-3 on agg

May 12 – Maldonado
Bella Vista Montevideo (Uru) 1 (Garcia 59)
Deportivo Cali (Col) 1 (Bonilla 80)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Sequeira (Arg)
Bella Vista: Berbia, Pilipauskas (Lopez), Pumar, Lembo, Moran, Giacomazzi, Casanova, Lemos, Ortiz (Jauma), Alonso, Garcia (Gareca).
Deportivo Cali: Dudamel, Marrero, Yepes, Mosquera, Bedoya, Valencia, Viveros, Batancour, Candelo (Gaviria), Hurtado (Castillo), Bonilla (Cordoba).
Deportivo Cali won 3-2 on agg

May 12 – Sao Paulo
Corinthians (Bra) 2 (Edilson 39, Ricardinho 55)
Palmeiras (Bra) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,000
Corinthians: Mauricio, Indio, Nene, Gamarra, Silvinho, Vampeta, Ricardinho, Rincon, Marcelinho, Edilson, Fernando Baiano.
Palmeiras: Marcos, Arce, Junior Baiano, Cleber, Junior, Cesar Sampaio, Galeano, Alex, Zinho, Paulo Nunes, Oseas.
Aggregate 2-2. Palmeiras won 4-2 on pens

ARGENTINA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

April 19

Gimnasia LP 3 (San Esteban pen 35, Reggi 51, Pereyra 57)
Newell's Old Boys 2 (Cobelli 22, Saldana 74)

April 23-25

Argentinos Juniors 2 (Quinteros 14, Sabbag 84)
Belgrano Cordoba 1 (Rueda 5)

Estudiantes 1 (Quatrocchi 41)
Lanus 1 (F Di Alessio 17)

Newell's Old Boys 4 (Cobelli 53, Manso 62, Real 65, Fagiani pen 84)
Huracan 0

Platense 0
Boca Juniors 2 (Palermo pen 4, Arruabarrena 67)

River Plate 1 (Angel 64)
Union Santa Fe 0

San Lorenzo 3 (I Cordoba 16, Coudet 57, Gorosito 80)
Independiente 0

Talleres Cordoba 1 (Astudillo 88)
Rosario Central 3 (Quiroga 4, Pierucci 86, Pino og 90)

Velez Sarsfield 0 Ferro Carril Oeste 0

April 27-29

Belgrano Cordoba 2 (Testa 22, Avalos 42)
Newell's Old Boys 1 (Fagiani 71)

Boca Juniors 1 (Palermo 82)
Colon Santa Fe 1 (Fuertes 28)

Ferro Carril Oeste 2 (Chaparro 63, Mandra 66)
River Plate 2 (Alvarez 57, Saviola 90)

Gimnasia J 1 (Garnier 88)
Velez Sarsfield 2 (Zarate 35, 39)

Gimnasia LP 2 (San Esteban pen 28, Reggi 48)
Platense 0

Huracan 1 (Barlatay 71)
Racing Club 2 (Ojeda 16, Lux 84)

Independiente 3 (J Calderon 38, 67, Cambiasso 90)
Talleres Cordoba 2 (Maidana 4, Zelaya 23)

Lanus 1 (F Di Alessio 90)
San Lorenzo 2 (Barrionuevo og 12, Coudet 40)

Rosario Central 0 Argentinos Juniors 0

Union Santa Fe 1 (Fernandez 69)
Estudiantes 4 (Simone 15, 20, Rogmanoli 45, Gimenez 90)

April 30-May 3

Argentinos Juniors 1 (Moreno 56)
Newell's Old Boys 4 (Saldana 21, Cobelli 23, 79, Real 57)

Colon Santa Fe 2 (Cufre og 7, Muller 73)
Gimnasia LP 2 (Messera 13, 32)

Estudiantes 1 (Farias 75)
Ferro Carril Oeste 2 (Chaparro 26, Moya 32)

Platense 2 (Jimenez 78, Godoy 90)
Huracan 1 (Casas 9)

River Plate 8 (Angel 29, 44, Castillo 42, 84, Ramos pen 64, Rambert 77, Gancedo 86, 89)
Gimnasia J 0

Rosario Central 0
Independiente 2 (Hanuch 17, Cambiasso 34)

San Lorenzo 4 (Coudet 3, Galetto 44, Gorosito 76, Romeo 79)
Union Santa Fe 1 (Fernandez 33)

Talleres Cordoba 3 (Astudillo 58, Oliva pen 68, Pino 86)
Lanus 0

Velez Sarsfield 0
Boca Juniors 3 (Palermo 24, 45, Riquelme 58)

May 5

Colon Santa Fe 1 (Muller 25)
Gimnasia J 3 (Morelas Santos 13, Astudillo 64, Lobo 85)

May 7-10

Belgrano Cordoba 0 Platense 0

Boca Juniors 2 (Bermudez 21, Palermo 55)
River Plate 1 (Netto pen 52)

Ferro Carril Oeste 0
San Lorenzo 1 (Romeo 62)

Gimnasia J 1 (Morales Santos 3)
Estudiantes 1 (Gimenez 70)

Gimnasia LP 3 (Sanguinetti 39, Troglio 67, Sava 69)
Velez Sarsfield 1 (Cordone pen 71)

Huracan 0
Colon Santa Fe 3 (Cordoba 12, Cantero 35, Fuertes 53)

Independiente 1 (Calderon 42)
Argentinos Juniors 0

Lanus 1 (H Morales 55)
Rosario Central 2 (Moreno y Fabianesi 23, D Perez 58)

Union Santa Fe 2 (Gigena 3, Noriega 26)
Talleres Cordoba 1 (Cuenca pen 90)

May 14-17

Argentinos Juniors 1 (Quinteros 16)
Racing Club 0

Colon Santa Fe 2 (Aquino 35, Unali 40
Belgrano Cordoba 1 (Artime 90)

Estudiantes 1 (Gimenez 90)
Boca Juniors 1 (Riquelme 85)

Independiente 2 (Calderon 56, J Ramirez 62)
Lanus 0

Platense 0
Newell's Old Boys 3 (Real 41, Saldana 70, Vattimos og 74)

River Plate 3 (Cueves 36, Angel 65, Gancedo 90)
Gimnasia LP 1 (F Fernandez 73)

Talleres Cordoba 2 (Astudillo 33, Gorocito 45)
Ferro Carril Oeste 0

San Lorenzo 2 (I Cordoba 71, Ameli 84)
Gimnasia J 3 (M Lobo 15, 82, Morales Santos 60)

Velez Sarsfield 1 (Pandolfi 20)
Huracan 1 (Montenegro 86)

ARGENTINA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boca Juniors	13	10	3	0	25	4	33
River Plate	13	8	3	2	28	12	27
San Lorenzo	13	8	3	2	24	12	27
Independiente	13	6	4	3	19	16	22
Rosario Central	12	6	3	3	16	15	21
Newell's Old Boys	12	6	2	4	23	12	20
Gimnasia LP	12	6	2	4	23	24	20
Colon Santa Fe	13	5	4	4	19	15	19
Union Santa Fe	12	5	2	5	18	18	17
Belgrano Cordoba	12	5	2	5	16	16	17
Lanus	13	5	2	6	20	21	17
Argentinos Juniors	13	4	3	6	12	18	15
Estudiantes	13	3	5	5	14	15	14
Talleres Cordoba	12	4	2	6	16	18	14
Velez Sarsfield	13	3	4	6	12	19	13
Gimnasia J	13	3	3	7	20	32	12
Racing Club	9	3	1	5	9	13	10
Ferro Carril Oeste	13	1	6	6	4	12	9
Huracan	13	2	3	8	10	24	9
Platense	13	1	4	8	11	25	7

Relegation averages (on points obtained over last three seasons – bottom two relegated): Gimnasia J 1.157; Ferro Carril Oeste 1.148; Union 1.112; Platense 1.074; Huracan 0.870 (already relegated)

BOLIVIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Apr 18: The Strongest 2 Santa Cruz 1; Jorge Wilstermann 4 Oriente 3; Blooming 5 Independiente 0; Destroyers 1 Bolivar 1; Bamin Real 1 Union Central 1.
Apr 25: Bolivar 3 The Strongest 2; Santa Cruz 2 Bamin Real 1; Independiente 2 Oriente 1; San Jose 4 Destroyers 1; Union Central 3 Jorge Wilstermann 0; Blooming 4 Guabira 1.
May 2: Oriente 2 Union Central 2; Destroyers 1 Blooming 2; The Strongest 4 San Jose 3; Bamin Real 2 Bolivar 2; Jorge Wilstermann 5 Santa Cruz 2; Guabira 3 Oriente 2.
May 9: Guabira 2 Destroyers 2; San Jose 3 Bamin Real 1; Independiente 2 Union Central 3; Santa Cruz 2 Oriente 2; Bolivar 2 Jorge Wilstermann 1; Blooming 3 The Strongest 1.
May 12: The Strongest 2 Guabira 2; Bamin Real 2 Blooming 0; Jorge Wilstermann 1 San Jose 0; Union Central 3 Santa Cruz 0; Oriente 3 Bolivar 1; Destroyers 4 Independiente 3.
May 16: Bolivar 1 Union Central 1; Guabira 3 Bamin Real 3; San Jose 3 Oriente 1; Destroyers 3 The Strongest 1; Independiente 2 Santa Cruz 0.

BOLIVIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolivar	18	8	8	2	34	19	32
Union Central	18	8	6	4	32	22	30
Independiente	18	9	2	7	37	32	29
Blooming	14	9	1	4	29	13	28
Bamin Real	19	7	6	6	29	32	27
Santa Cruz	19	7	4	8	30	41	25
Guabira	19	5	8	6	28	37	23
San Jose	17	7	1	9	28	28	22
The Strongest	19	6	3	10	28	31	21
Oriente	18	5	5	8	28	28	20
J Wilstermann	16	5	4	7	32	33	19
Destroyers	19	5	4	10	29	48	19

BRAZIL

COPA BRASIL – QTR-FINALS

1st legs
May 6: Botafogo 2 Atletico Paranaense 1.
May 15: Flamengo 2 Palmeiras 1; Juventude 2 Bahia 2; Internacional 1 Goias 1.

2nd leg
May 12: Atletico Paranaense 2 Botafogo 1
Aggregate 3-3. Botafogo won 4-1 on pens

CARIOCA (RIO) CHAMPIONSHIP – 2ND STAGE

Apr 24: Flamengo 1 Olaria 0.
Apr 25: Bangu 0 Vasco 1; Itaperuna 1 Botafogo 1; Friburguense 1 Madureira 1; Fluminense 2 Americano 3.
May 1: Vasco 5 Itaperuna 0.
May 2: Madureira 2 Fluminense 2; Americano 3 Olaria 1; Friburguense 1 Botafogo 0; Flamengo 3 Bangu 0.
May 8: Botafogo 5 Americano 3; Bangu 0 Friburguense 0.
May 9: Itaperuna 0 Flamengo 4; Vasco 1 Fluminense 0; Olaria 0 Madureira 1.
May 15: Fluminense 2 Friburguense 3; Bangu 2 Olaria 2; Madureira 5 Itaperuna 0.
May 16: Americano 0 Vasco 1; Flamengo 0 Botafogo 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Vasco da Gama	4	4	0	0	8	0	12
Flamengo	4	3	0	1	8	1	9
Madureira	4	2	2	0	9	3	8
Friburguense	4	2	2	0	5	3	8
Botafogo	4	2	1	1	7	5	7
Americano	4	2	0	2	9	9	6
Bangu	4	0	2	2	2	6	2
Fluminense	4	0	1	3	6	9	1
Olaria	4	0	1	3	3	7	1
Itaperuna	4	0	1	3	1	15	1

SAO PAULO CHAMPIONSHIP – SECOND PHASE

Apr 21: Sao Paulo 2-0 Portuguesa 0; Matonense 1 Rio Branco 3; Mogi Mirim 0 Santos 2; Barbarense 4 Guarani 1.
Apr 23: Corinthians 2 Portuguesa Sant 0; Inter Limeira 1 Palmeiras 1.
Apr 25: Inter Limeira 1 Sao Paulo 2; Rio Branco 1 Portuguesa 2; Palmeiras 0 Matonense 0; Mogi Mirim 1 Barbarense 0; Portuguesa Sant 0 Guarani 1; Santos 4 Corinthians 2.
May 1: Sao Paulo 3 Rio Branco 2; Guarani 0 Santos 1.
May 2: Matonense 4 Inter Limeira 3; Portuguesa 1 Palmeiras 0; Corinthians 1 Mogi Mirim 4; Barbarense 1 Portuguesa Sant 0.
May 5: Sao Paulo 3 Matonense 2; Portuguesa 3 Inter Limeira 3; Guarani 4 Mogi Mirim 1; Portuguesa Sant 1 Santos 6.
May 7: Rio Branco 2 Palmeiras 3; Barbarense 1 Corinthians 3.
May 9: Inter Limeira 3 Rio Branco 2; Matonense 0 Portuguesa 2; Palmeiras 1 Sao Paulo 5; Mogi Mirim 2 Portuguesa Sant 1; Corinthians 2 Guarani 1; Santos 2 Barbarense 2.
May 15: Portuguesa Sant 0 Corinthians 2.
May 16: Rio Branco 3 Matonense 0; Portuguesa 1 Sao Paulo 1; Palmeiras 4 Inter Limeira1; Santos 1 Mogi Mirim 1; Guarani 3 Barbarense 4.

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sao Paulo	14	11	3	0	42	16	36
Portuguesa	14	8	3	3	25	21	27
Palmeiras	14	7	5	2	26	19	26
Matonense	14	5	2	7	25	28	17
Rio Branco	14	5	1	8	34	29	16
Inter Limeira	14	4	4	6	25	33	16

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Santos	14	8	4	2	34	17	28
Corinthians	14	7	1	6	26	26	22
Barbarense	14	6	2	6	26	22	20
Mogi Mirim	14	4	3	7	16	30	15
Guarani	14	3	2	9	21	30	11
Portuguesa Sant	14	0	2	12	9	38	2

Teams play once against the sides in the other group and twice against teams in their own group. Top two in each group qualify for the semi-finals. First-phase groups were named 1 and 2; second-phase groups are named 3 and 4.

CHILE

Apr 25: O'Higgins 2 Rangers 0; Santiago Morning 1 Palestino 2; Dep Concepcion 3 Audax Italiano 3; U Catolica 2 Colo Colo 1; Cobresal 3 Dep La Serena 1; Cobreloa 2 Puerto Montt 2; Coquimbo Unido 1 Huachipato 1; U de Chile 2 Dep Iquique 1.
May 2: Santiago Morning 5 Coquimbo Unido 0; Puerto Montt 2 Colo Colo 0; Dep Iquique 2 Cobresal 0; Audax Italiano 0 O'Higgins 2; Dep La Serena 1 Dep Concepcion 1; Rangers 2 Palestino 1; Huachipato 1 Cobreloa 3; U de Chile 0 U Catolica 0.
May 9: Cobresal 3 U de Chile 3; Palestino 0 Audax Italiano 1; U Catolica 3 Puerto Montt 0; Dep Concepcion 2 Dep Iquique 0; O'Higgins 1 Dep La Serena 3; Cobreloa 4 Santiago Morning 0; Coquimbo Unido 4 Rangers 0; Colo Colo 3 Huachipato 2.
May 16: U de Chile 5 Dep Concepcion 2; Rangers 3 Cobreloa 3; Cobresal 3 U Catolica 3; Dep Iquique 2 O'Higgins 2; Dep La Serena 4 Palestino 4; Audax Italiano 4 Coquimbo Unido 2; Santiago Morning 2 Colo Colo 2; Puerto Montt 1 Huachipato 1.

CHILE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cobreloa	12	7	4	1	36	13	25
U de Chile	12	7	4	1	25	16	25
Cobresal	12	6	3	3	25	19	21
Colo Colo	12	6	3	3	21	16	21
U Catolica	12	5	4	3	25	15	19
Santiago Morning	12	5	2	5	18	18	17
Dep Concepcion	12	4	4	4	16	15	16
Dep Iquique	12	4	4	4	14	14	16
Huachipato	12	4	4	4	19	20	16
Palestino	12	4	2	6	23	22	14
Puerto Montt	12	3	5	4	17	20	14
Auxas Italiano	12	3	4	5	13	15	13
Dep La Serena	12	2	5	5	18	26	11
O'Higgins	12	3	2	7	17	25	11
Coquimbo Unido	12	3	2	7	17	37	11
Rangers	12	2	4	6	13	26	10

COLOMBIA

April 25: Envigado 2 Union Santa Marta 2; Cortulua 3 Indep Santa Fe 1; At Junior 3 Quindio 0; Millonarios 1 America 2; Dep Cali 2 Tolima 1; Indep Medellin 2 Bucaramanga 2; Dep Pasto 0 Nacional 0; At Huila 2 Once Caldas 2.
Apr 29: Once Caldas 6 America 0; Tolima 1 Envigado 0; Union Santa Marta 0 Cortulua 0; Indep Santa Fe 2 Dep Pasto 2; Nacional 1 Indep Medellin 0; Bucaramanga 1 At Junior 1; Quindio 3 At Huila 1; Dep Cali 2 Millonarios 0.
May 2: At Junior 0 Nacional 1; Envigado 3 Dep Cali 1; At Huila 1 Bucaramanga 1; Millonarios 3 Once Caldas 2; Indep Medellin 4 Indep Santa Fe 2; Dep Pasto 1 Union Santa Marta 0; America 4 Quindio 1; Cortulua 0 Tolima 1.
May 9: Bucaramanga 1 America 2; Tolima 2 Dep Pasto 2; Dep Cali 1 Cortulua 1; Union Santa Marta 1 Indep Medellin 1; Nacional 5 At Huila 1; Quindio 1 Once Caldas 1; Indep Santa Fe 2 At Junior 2; Envigado 3 Millonarios 1.
May 16: At Huila 0 Indep Santa Fe 0; Once Caldas 0 Bucaramanga 0; At Junior 3 Union Santa Marta 2; Indep Medellin 1 Tolima 1; Dep Pasto 3 Dep Cali 1; Cortulua 1 Envigado 0; Millonarios 2 Quindio 4.

COLOMBIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	15	8	5	2	19	10	29
America	15	8	4	3	30	19	28
At Junior	16	7	6	3	27	24	27
Dep Cali	16	7	3	6	26	29	24
Bucaramanga	16	4	10	2	23	15	22
Dep Pasto	16	4	10	2	28	22	22
Cortulua	16	6	4	6	22	24	22
Tolima	16	4	9	3	16	14	21
Once Caldas	16	5	5	6	24	16	20
Indep Santa Fe	16	4	7	5	18	18	19
Quindio	16	5	4	7	24	30	19
Indep Medellin	16	3	9	4	17	17	18
Envigado	16	4	4	8	14	23	16
Millonarios	16	3	6	7	16	27	15
Union Santa M	16	2	8	6	22	28	14
At Huila	16	2	8	6	12	22	14

ECUADOR

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Apr 25: Barcelona 2 Audaz Octubrino 1; Espoli 1 El Nacional 2; LDU 3 Olmedo 0; Dep Quito 0 Aucas 0; Dep Cuenca 1 Emelec 4; Macara 2 Delfin 2.
Apr 28: LDU 3 Barcelona 2; El Nacional 1 Audaz Octubrino 1; Delfin 3 Aucas 0; Olmedo 1 Espoli 1.
May 2: Barcelona 0 El Nacional 1; Aucas 2 Emelec 1; Espoli 0 LDU 1; Macara 2 Dep Quito 0; Audaz Octubrino 0 Olmedo 2; Delfin 1 Dep Cuenca 1.
May 9: Emelec 3 Aucas 0; LDU 0 Espoli 2; El Nacional 4 Barcelona 0; Dep Quito 1 Macara 1; Dep Cuenca 4 Delfin 1; Olmedo 1 Audaz Octubrino 0.
May 16: Barcelona 2 LDU 2; Audaz Octubrino 1 El Nacional 0; Dep Quito 4 Emelec 2; Aucas 0 Delfin 1; Macara 2 Dep Cuenca 0; Espoli 3 Olmedo 0.

ECUADOR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
LDU	13	8	2	3	23	16	26
El Nacional	13	6	6	1	18	7	24
Emelec	13	6	2	5	23	18	20
Macara	13	5	5	3	14	11	20
Barcelona	13	6	2	5	17	18	20
Olmedo	13	5	4	4	14	16	19
Dep Cuenca	13	5	3	5	17	19	18
Espoli	13	5	2	6	18	16	17
Dep Quito	13	4	4	5	19	17	16
Delfin	13	4	4	5	16	23	16
Aucas	13	3	1	9	12	19	10
Audaz Octubrino	13	3	1	9	11	22	10

PARAGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Apr 25: Olimpia 1 Sportivo Luqueno 0; 12 de Octubre 1 Guarani 1; Cerro Porteno 1 Sol de America 1; Resistencia 1 Cerro Cora 3; Presidente Hayes 0 Colegiales 2.
May 2: Guarani 1 Cerro Porteno 1; Sol de America 0 Olimpia 1; Sportivo Luqueno 4 Presidente Hayes 1; Colegiales 3 Resistencia 0; Cerro Cora 1 San Lorenzo 1.

1ST STAGE – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olimpia	10	8	2	0	26	8	26
Sportivo Luqueno	10	6	3	1	22	13	21
Cerro Porteno	10	5	4	1	21	12	19
Guarani	10	4	4	2	16	12	16
Sol de America	10	4	3	3	13	9	15
San Lorenzo	10	3	4	3	15	14	13
Colegiales	10	4	1	5	16	19	13
12 de Octubre	10	2	5	3	11	12	11
Cerro Cora	10	2	3	5	17	23	9
Presidente Hayes	10	0	4	6	10	22	4
Resistencia	10	0	1	9	6	29	1

Top eight qualified for second stage

2ND STAGE

May 9: Group A – Olimpia 2 San Lorenzo 2; 12 de Octubre 2 Sol de America 0. Group B – Guarani 2 Sportivo Luqueno 0; Cerro Porteno 1 Colegiales 4.
May 16: Group A – Sol de America 2 San Lorenzo 0; 12 de Octubre 1 Olimpia 2. Group B – Colegiales 1 Sportivo Luqueno 1; Cerro Porteno 2 Guarani 1.

PERU

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Apr 25: Alianza Lima 7 Dep Pesquero 0; Universitario 4 Sport Boys 0; Cienciano 2 Sporting Cristal 0; Dep Municipal 1 Union Minas 1; Alianza Atletico 6 IMI Talara 0; Juan Aurich 0 Melgar 0.
Apr 29: Sporting Cristal 1 Universitario 1; Alianza Lima 4 Union Minas 1; Sport Boys 2 Dep Municipal 0; Melgar 2 Cienciano 0; Dep Pesquero 2 Alianza Atletico 2; IMI Talara 2 Juan Aurich 1.
May 2: Dep Municipal 1 Sporting Cristal 4; Universitario 1 Melgar 0; Alianza Lima 1 Sport Boys 0; Cienciano 2 IMI Talara 1; Alianza Atletico 2 Union Minas 2; Juan Aurich 3 Dep Pesquero 0.
May 9: Sport Boys 4 Alianza Atletico 2; Alianza Lima 3 Sporting Cristal 2; Melgar 1 Dep Municipal 1; Dep Pesquero 3 Cienciano 3; IMI Talara 0 Universitario 3; Union Minas 1 Juan Aurich 0.
May 16: Alianza Lima 5 Melgar 0; Juan Aurich 1 Sport Boys 0; Alianza Atletico 0 Sporting Cristal 0; Cienciano 1 Union Minas 1; Universitario 1 Dep Pesquero 0; Dep Municipal 3 IMI Talara 2.

PERU

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Universitario	17	11	4	2	29	14	37
Alianza Lima	17	10	4	3	41	17	34
Sporting Cristal	17	9	6	2	38	17	33
Cienciano	17	8	4	5	24	19	28
Sport Boys	17	6	6	5	22	20	24
Melgar	17	6	5	6	25	22	23
Alianza Atletico	17	5	6	6	32	33	21
Dep Municipal	17	4	5	8	18	29	17
Union Minas	17	3	6	8	20	25	15
Juan Aurich	17	3	6	8	16	26	15
Dep Pesquero	17	2	8	7	16	32	14
IMI Talara	17	4	2	11	18	47	14

URUGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

May 2: Bella Vista M 2 River Plate 0; Penarol 4 Defensor 4; Rentistas 2 Cerro 0; Huracan Buceo 0 Bella Vista P 0; Dep Maldonado 1 Liverpool 0; Frontera Rivera 2 Tacuarembo 0; Nacional 2 Danubio 0.
May 9: Bella Vista P 1 Nacional 0; Rampla Juniors 0 Cerro 1; Dep Maldonado 3 Tacuarembo 1; Danubio 2 Bella Vista M 1; Penarol 1 Liverpool 1; Rentistas 1 Defensor 1; Frontera Rivera 0 Huracan Buceo 2.
May 12: Defensor 3 Rampla Juniors 0; Huracan Buceo 1 Dep Maldonado 1; Cerro 2 River Plate 1; Liverpool 0 Rentistas 0; Penarol 3 Tacuarembo 0; Nacional 3 Frontera Rivera 0.
May 15-16: Nacional 2 Dep Maldonado 1; Penarol 1 Huracan Buceo 0; Cerro 3 Danubio 1; Defensor 1 River Plate 1; Tacuarembo 1 Rentistas 0; Bella Vista M 2 Frontera Rivera 1; Rampla Juniors 1 Liverpool 0.

URUGUAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	9	7	1	1	24	5	22
Penarol	11	6	4	1	20	9	22
Defensor	10	6	3	1	28	12	21
Danubio	10	6	2	2	27	14	20
Cerro	9	6	0	3	17	16	18
Rentistas	11	4	4	3	11	7	16
Bella Vista M	9	4	3	2	16	10	15
Dep Maldonado	11	3	3	5	15	18	12
Bella Vista P	9	3	3	3	7	13	12
Rampla Juniors	10	3	1	6	7	17	10
Frontera Rivera	11	2	3	6	12	16	9
River Plate	9	2	3	4	10	18	9
Tacuarembo	10	2	1	7	8	19	7
Huracan Buceo	10	1	4	5	7	21	7
Liverpool	10	0	5	5	5	17	5

VENEZUELA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Apr 18: Mineros Guayana 1 Estudiantes 0; Caracas FC 2 Nacional 2; Union Tachira 1 Nueva Cadiz 1; Univ de los Andes 1 Italchacao 2; Carabobo 1 Inter Lara 1.
Apr 25: Nueva Cadiz 1 Caracas FC 1; Italchacao 3 Mineros Guayana 2; Inter Lara 0 Univ de los Andes 1; Nacional 1 Carabobo 0; Estudiantes 1 Union Tachira 0.
May 2: Union Tachira 0 Italchacao 0; Caracas FC 1 Carabobo 1; Mineros Guayana 1 Inter Lara 3; Nueva Cadiz 1 Estudiantes 1; Univ de los Andes 3 Nacional 0.
May 9: Estudiantes 3 Caracas FC 0; Carabobo 4 Univ de los Andes 4; Italchacao 2 Nueva Cadiz 1; Inter Lara 2 Union Tachira 2; Nacional 1 Mineros Guayana 2.

VENEZUELA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Estudiantes	16	9	6	1	26	11	33
Italchacao	16	8	6	2	23	20	30
Univ de los Andes	16	8	3	5	28	23	27
Nueva Cadiz	16	5	6	5	30	19	21
Mineros Guayana	16	5	6	5	27	25	21
Inter Lara	16	5	4	7	23	23	19
Caracas FC	16	3	8	5	18	21	17
Nacional	16	4	4	8	15	27	16
Union Tachira	16	3	7	6	17	30	16
Carabobo	16	2	6	8	14	22	12

CONCACAF

MEXICO

SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIP

Apr 24: Toluca 5 Celaya 2; Necaxa 2 Atlante 2; Tigres 4 Santos 2.
Apr 25: Guadalajara 3 Leon 0; Morelia 1 Atlas 2; Pachuca 3 UAG 0; UNAM 2 Monterrey 1; America 1 Puebla 1; Neza 1 Cruz Azul 1.
Apr 30: UAG 1 Guadalajara 0.
May 1: Cruz Azul 3 Monterrey 2; Tigres 1 UNAM 2; Puebla 1 Neza 0; Celaya 3 Morelia 1; Atlas 3 America 2.
May 2: Leon 3 Toluca 2; Atlante 0 Pachuca 0; Santos 3 Necaxa 1.
May 9: Toluca 3 UAG 2; Monterrey 1 Puebla 1; Necaxa 1 Tigres 1; Guadalajara 2 Atlante 5; Morelia 1 Leon 0; Pachuca 1 Santos 0; UNAM 1 Cruz Azul 0; America 2 Celaya 2; Neza 5 Atlas 2.

GROUP 1 – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruz Azul	17	9	4	4	30	24	31
Guadalajara	17	7	5	5	24	21	26
Atletico Celaya	17	6	6	5	29	26	24
Leon	17	5	1	11	19	33	16
Puebla	17	3	4	10	15	30	13

GROUP 2 – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
America	17	9	4	4	30	25	31
Atletico Morelia	17	8	1	8	23	23	25
Pachuca	17	6	6	5	23	22	24
Pumas UNAM	17	6	3	8	19	27	21
Toros Neza	17	4	5	8	21	29	17

GROUP 3 – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Necaxa	17	5	7	5	30	25	22
Tecos UAG	17	6	1	10	21	28	19
Atlante	17	4	6	7	31	34	18
Monterrey	17	4	2	11	25	38	14

GROUP 4 – FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Toluca	17	12	3	2	50	23	39
Atlas	17	10	4	3	34	22	34
Santos Laguna	17	9	2	6	33	29	29
Tigres	17	7	2	8	34	32	23

Group winners and three runners-up with most points qualified automatically for quarter-finals. Runners-up with fewest points (Tecos UAG) played off with third-placed team with most points (Santos Laguna).

Play-off
May 13: Tecos UAG 1 Santos Laguna 4.
May 16: Santos Laguna 3 Tecos UAG 4.
Santos Laguna qualified for quarter-finals 7-5 on agg.

USA

Apr 24: DC United 2 New England 3; Miami Fusion 1 Kansas City Wizards 0; Dallas Burn 2 Columbus Crew 0; LA Galaxy 1 San Jose Clash 0.
Apr 25: MetroStars 0 Tampa Bay 1.
Apr 28: Kansas City Wizards 0 Columbus Crew 1.
Apr 30: San Jose Clash 1 Dallas Burn 1
San Jose won on shoot-outs.
May 1: Tampa Bay 2 Miami Fusion 1; New England 1 Colorado Rapids 2; Chicago Fire 3 DC United 2; MetroStars 0 LA Galaxy 0 *Galaxy won on shoot-outs.*
May 8: DC United 2 MetroStars 1; Kansas City Wizards 2 LA Galaxy 1; Dallas Burn 1 Colorado Rapids 1 *Colorado won on shoot-outs*; New England 0 Miami Fusion 0 *New England won on shoot-outs*; Tampa Bay 1 Chicago Fire 1 *Tampa won on shoot-outs.*
May 9: San Jose Clash 1 Columbus Crew 2.
May 15: MetroStars 3 Miami Fusion 2; Columbus Crew 2 New England 0; Kansas City Wizards 3 DC United 3 *DC United won on shoot-outs*; Dallas Burn 2 San Jose Clash 1; Los Angeles Galaxy 0 Tampa Bay 0 *Tampa Bay won on shoot-outs.*

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	SW	SL	L	F	A	Pts
Columbus Crew	8	4	1	1	2	9	7	13
DC United	8	3	2	1	2	18	15	11
MetroStars	8	2	2	1	3	8	9	8
Tampa Bay	8	2	2	1	3	10	13	8
New England	8	2	1	3	2	8	9	7
Miami Fusion	9	1	2	2	4	10	17	5

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	SW	SL	L	F	A	Pts
Chicago Fire	7	5	0	2	0	15	5	15
Dallas Burn	9	4	1	4	0	13	5	13
Colorado Rapids	6	2	2	2	0	11	7	8
Los Angeles	9	1	4	2	2	5	6	7
San Jose Clash	9	0	5	0	4	9	14	5
Kansas City	9	1	0	3	5	7	16	3

SW = shoot-out win – 1pt; SL = shoot-out loss

AFRICA

NATIONS CUP QUALIFIERS

Group 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cameroon	3	2	1	0	7	1	7
Mozambique	3	1	0	2	4	8	3
Eritrea	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Remaining games
05.06.99 Cameroon-Eritrea
19.06.99 Eritrea-Mozambique

Group 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Morocco	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Togo	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Guinea	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Remaining games
05.06.99 Morocco-Guinea
19.06.99 Guinea-Togo

Group 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ivory Coast	4	3	0	1	6	1	9
Congo	4	2	1	1	2	2	7
Mali	4	1	2	1	2	2	5
Namibia	4	0	1	3	1	6	1

Remaining games
05.06.99 Namibia-Ivory Coast
06.06.99 Mali-Congo
19.06.99 Ivory Coast-Mali
19.06.99 Congo-Namibia

Group 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Africa	4	2	1	1	6	3	7
Gabon	4	2	0	2	5	7	6
Mauritius	4	1	2	1	4	4	5
Angola	4	1	1	2	4	5	4

Remaining games
05.06.99 South Africa-Mauritius
05.06.99 Gabon-Angola
19.06.99 Angola-South Africa
19.06.99 Mauritius-Gabon

Group 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burkina Faso	3	2	1	0	6	3	7
Burundi	3	1	0	2	3	5	3
Senegal	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

Remaining games
05.06.99 Burkina Faso-Senegal
19.06.99 Burundi-Senegal

Group 6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zambia	4	3	1	0	5	2	10
DR Congo	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
Madagascar	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
Kenya	4	0	1	3	2	5	1

Remaining games
05.06.99 Kenya-DR Congo
05.06.99 Zambia-Madagascar
19.06.99 DR Congo-Zambia
19.06.99 Madagascar-Kenya

Group 7

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
TUNISIA*	4	4	0	0	11	1	12
Algeria	4	1	1	2	6	5	4
Liberia	4	1	1	2	5	7	4
Uganda	4	1	0	3	2	11	3

**Qualified.*

Remaining games
05.06.99 Uganda-Liberia
05.06.99 Tunisia-Algeria
19.06.99 Algeria-Uganda
19.06.99 Liberia-Tunisia

The top two teams in Groups 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7, and the winners of Groups 1 and 5 qualify for the finals next year. The runners-up in Groups 1 and 5 go into a play-off group with Zimbabwe, from which the top team will qualify. Egypt qualify automatically as holders; Ghana and Nigeria qualify automatically as co-hosts.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

FIRST ROUND

Kaloum Stars (Gui) 3 Shooting Stars (Nig) 0;
Shooting Stars 6 Kaloum Stars 0
Shooting Stars won 6-3 on agg.

SECOND ROUND

1st legs, April 30-May 2; 2nd legs, May 14-16
Al Ahly (Egy) 3 Rayon Sport (Rwa) 0
Rayon Sport 1 Al Ahly 0
Al Ahly won 3-1 on agg
Raja Casablanca (Mor) 2 Djoliba (Mli) 1
Djoliba 2 Raja Casablanca 1
Aggregate 3-3. Raja won 7-6 on pens
ASEC Abidjan (IvC) 4 USM El Harrach (Alg) 0
USM El Harrach 2 ASEC Abidjan 1
ASEC Abidjan won 5-2 on agg
Hearts of Oak (Gha) 3 SC Villa (Uga) 0
SC Villa 1 Hearts of Oak 1
Hearts of Oak won 4-1 on agg
Mamelodi Sundowns (SAf) 1 SS Saint-Louisienne (Reu) 1
SS Saint-Louisienne 4 Mamelodi Sundowns 2
SS Saint-Louisienne won 5-3 on agg
Esperance (Tun) 5 Al Hilal (Sud) 0
Al Hilal 3 Esperance 3
Esperance won 8-3 on agg
Vital'O (Brd) 0 Dynamos (Zim) 2
Dynamos 1 Vital'O 0
Dynamos won 3-0 on agg
Still to play: Shooting Stars (Nig) v DC Motema Pembe (DRC)

CUP-WINNERS CUP

FIRST ROUND

Petro Atletico (Ang) 2 AS Dragons (DRC) 0;
AS Dragons 4 Petro Atletico 1
AS Dragons won 4-3 on agg

SECOND ROUND

1st legs, April 30-May 2; 2nd legs, May 14-16
AS Mineurs (Gui) 3 Al Shaat (Lby) 0
Al Shaat 2 AS Mineurs 1
AS Mineurs won 4-2 on agg
Wikki Tourists (Nig) 0 Royal Armed Forces (Mor) 1
Royal Armed Forces 2 Wikki Tourists 0
Royal Armed Forces won 3-0 on agg
Simba FC (Uga) 0 Africa Sports (IvC) 1
Africa Sports 2 Simba FC 0
Africa Sports won 3-0 on agg
Club Africain (Tun) 4 Dynamo Douala (Cam) 0
Dynamo Douala 1 Club Africain 2
Club Africain won 6-1 on agg
Inter-Stars (Brd) v Power Dynamos (Zam)
Power Dynamos – walkover; Inter-Stars withdrew
AS Dragons (DRC) 3 Mathare United (Ken) 1
Mathare United 1 AS Dragons 1
AS Dragons won 4-2 on agg
Orlando Pirates (SAf) 3 Maxaquene (Moz) 1
Maxaquene 4 Orlando Pirates 4
Orlando Pirates won 7-5 on agg
Asante Kotoko (Gha) 1 Al Masry (Egy) 0
Al Masry 1 Asante Kotoko 0
Aggregate 1-1. Al Masry won 4-2 on pens.

CAF CUP

SECOND ROUND

1st legs, April 30-May 2; 2nd legs May 14-16
Al Ahli (Sud) 0 US Medina (Alg) 2
US Medina 5 Al Ahli 0
US Medina won 7-0 on agg
Ferroviario Beira (Moz) 0 Canon Yaounde (Cam) 0
Canon Yaounde 1 Ferroviario Beira 0
Canon Yaounde won 1-0 on agg
Stade Tamponnaise (Reu) 0 Zamalek (Egy) 0
Zamalek 3 Stade Tamponnaise 0
Zamalek won 3-0 on agg
Vita Club (DRC) 1 Etoile Filante (BuF) 1
Etoile Filante 2 Vita Club 1
Etoile Filante won 3-2 on agg
Diaraf Dakar (Sen) 1 Wydad Casablanca (Mor) 1
Wydad Casablanca 2 Diaraf Dakar 1
Wydad Casablanca won 3-2 on agg
Saneamento Rangol (Ang) 1 Kwara United (Nig) 1
Kwara United – walkover; Saneamento Rangol withdrew from second leg
Express Red Eagles (Uga) 2 Etoile Sahel (Tun) 2
Etoile Sahel 2 Express Red Eagles 0
Etoile Sahel won 4-2 on agg
CS Sfaxien (Tun) 4 Nkana FC (Zam) 0
Nkana FC 1 CS Sfaxien 0
CS Sfaxien won 4-1 on agg

ASIA

CHAMPIONS CUP

All games played in Tehran

SEMI-FINALS

April 28
Al Ain (UAE) 2 (Fahd Hasan 35, 66)
Jubilo Iwata (Jap) 2 (Makoto Tanaka 15, Toshiya Fujita 37)
After extra time; Jubilo won 4-2 on pens
Dalian Wanda (Chn) 3 (Yan Song 60, 63, Li Ming 77)
Esteghlal (Irn) 4 (Mahmoud Fekri 44, Saeed Ali Mousavi 51, 108, Ali Reza Akbapour 84)
After extra time

THIRD-PLACE MATCH

April 30
Al Ain (UAE) 3 (Seydou Traore 7, Abedi Pele Ayew 61, Grarib Harib Farhan 80)
Dalian Wanda (Chn) 2 (Yan Song 23, Vaclav Nemelek 44)

FINAL

April 30
Jubilo Iwata (Jap) 2 (Hideto Suzuki 36, Masashi Nakayama 45)
Esteghlal (Irn) 1 (Sirous Dinmohammadi 66)

JAPAN

Apr 24: Verdy Kawasakai 1 JEF United Ichihara 0; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 2 Vissel Kobe 5; Kashiwa Reysol 3 Urawa Reds 1; Yokohama F Marinos 3 Kashima Antlers 3 (aet); Bellmare Hiratsuka 1 Gamba Osaka 3; Avispa Fukuoka 2 Cerezo Osaka 5; Shimizu S-Pulse 2 Jubilo Iwata 5; Kyoto Purple Sanga 1 Nagoya Grampus Eight 2.
Apr 28: JEF United Ichihara 2 Bellmare Hiratsuka 1; Urawa Reds 1 Yokohama F Marinos 2 (aet); Kashima Antlers 0 Shimizu S-Pulse 1; Nagoya Grampus Eight 0 Kashiwa Reysol 1 (aet); Gamba Osaka 1 Kyoto Purple Sanga 2; Vissel Kobe 1 Verdy Kawasaki 2 (aet); Avispa Fukuoka 2 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 3.
May 1: Verdy Kawasaki 2 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 0; Shimizu S-Pulse 2 Urawa Reds 2 (aet); Kyoto Purple Sanga 2 JEF United Ichihara 3 (aet); Kashiwa Reysol 4 Gamba Osaka 2; Yokohama F Marinos 4 Nagoya Grampus Eight 3 (aet); Bellmare Hiratsuka 2 Vissel Kobe 1; Cerezo Osaka 1 Kashima Antlers 0.
May 5: Gamba Osaka 1 Yokohama F Marinos 0; Kashima Antlers 1 Jubilo Iwata 2 (aet); Vissel Kobe 3 Kyoto Purple Sanga 2; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 3 Bellmare Hiratsuka 0; Avispa Fukuoka 1 Verdy Kawasaki 2; Nagoya Grampus Eight 3 Shimizu S-Pulse 4; Urawa Reds 2 Cerezo Osaka 3; JEF United Ichihara 2 Kashiwa Reysol 5.
May 8: Jubilo Iwata 4 Urawa Reds 3; Cerezo Osaka 1 Nagoya Grampus Eight 2; Bellmare Hiratsuka 0 Verdy Kawasaki 1; Shimizu S-Pulse 2 Gamba Osaka 1; Kashima Antlers 3 Avispa Fukuoka 0; Kyoto Purple Sanga 0 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 4; Kashiwa Reysol 1 Vissel Kobe 0; Yokohama F Marinos 4 JEF United 1.
May 15: Verdy Kawasaki 0 Kyoto Purple Sanga 3; Urawa Reds 1 Kashima Antlers 0; JEF United Ichihara 2 Shimizu S-Pulse 3; Nagoya Grampus Eight 1 Jubilo Iwata 2; Gamba Osaka 1 Cerezo Osaka 2; Vissel Kobe 1 Yokohama F Marinos 0; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 3 Kashiwa Reysol 1; Avispa Fukuoka 2 Bellmare Hiratsuka 0.

JAPAN

	P	W1	W2	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jubilo Iwata	11	9	1	0	1	25	11	29
Shimizu S-Pulse	13	8	1	1	3	27	21	27
Verdy Kawasaki	13	8	1	1	3	18	15	27
Sanfrecce H	13	8	0	0	5	26	15	24
Cerezo Osaka	12	8	0	0	4	21	19	24
Kashiwa Reysol	12	7	1	0	4	22	15	23
Yokohama FM	13	5	2	1	5	28	17	20
Kashima Antlers	12	5	1	1	5	21	14	18
Grampus Eight	13	5	0	1	7	20	21	16
Gamba Osaka	13	4	1	0	8	20	24	14
Urawa Reds	13	3	0	4	6	18	22	13
Vissel Kobe	13	3	1	1	8	19	23	12
Avispa Fukuoka	12	3	1	0	8	18	27	11
Kyoto Purple S	13	3	0	0	10	14	23	9
JEF United	13	1	2	2	8	17	31	9
Bellmare H	13	3	0	0	10	11	27	9

W1 = win in 90 minutes – 3pts; W2 = win in extra time – 2pts; D = draw after extra time – 1pt.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Wahda	32	19	7	6	67	34	64
Al Wasl	32	16	7	9	63	36	55
Al Ain	32	15	9	8	56	36	54
Al Nasr	32	15	8	9	62	48	53
Al Ahli	32	15	6	11	65	50	51
Al Jazira	32	13	7	12	54	39	46
Al Shabab	32	12	7	13	40	48	43
Al Shaab	32	10	12	10	51	48	42
Al Khaleej	32	11	8	13	61	65	41
Baniyas	32	9	10	13	41	51	37
Sharjah	32	9	10	13	42	58	37
Ras Al Khaiam	32	2	1	29	35	124	7

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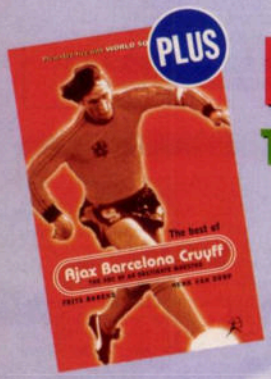

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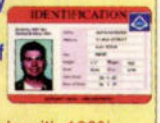

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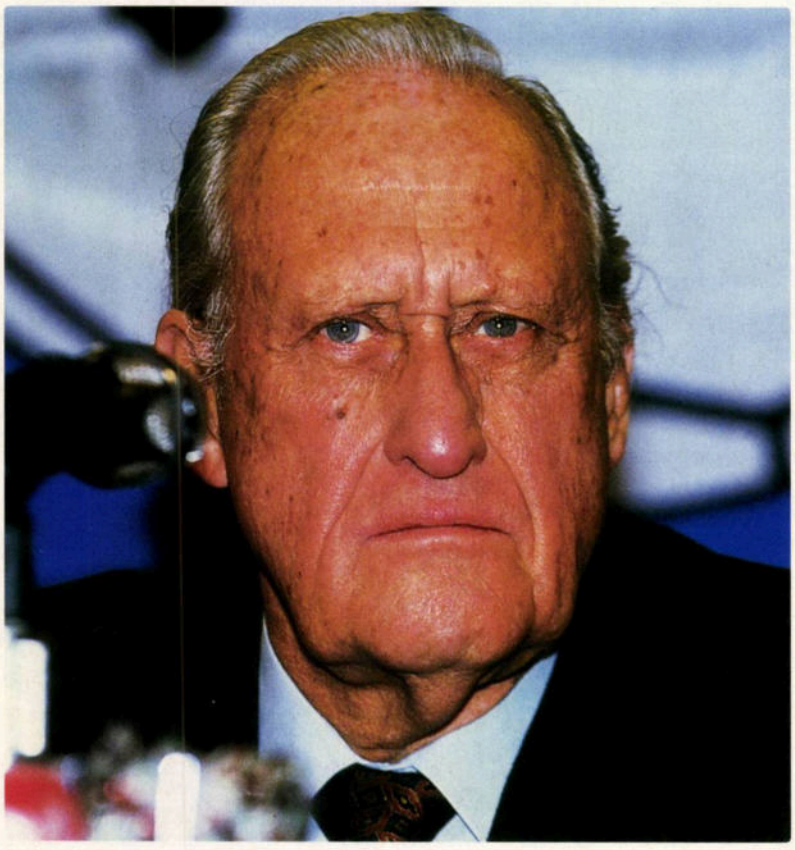
Brian Glanville's LAST WORD

'What happened during Havelange's years as FIFA president is chronicled in sickening detail by David Yallop in his new book'



Subject of allegations...former FIFA president Joao Havelange

Havelange silent as accusations fly

THERE IS a Sherlock Holmes story about the dog that didn't bark in the night. By the same token, the most astonishing aspect of David Yallop's book *How They Stole The Game* is not that Sepp Blatter has tried to embargo it, but that Joao Havelange seemingly has done nothing.

Such are the ferocious accusations against him, all of them seemingly so well documented, that either they are libellous or he is afraid to go to court.

Havelange, of course, that Teflon president of FIFA, has survived and ignored many an exposé before. Not least just after the Mexico World Cup of 1986 – the one that he and Mexican TV tycoon Emilio Ascarraga prised away from Colombia – when he was grilled on the *World In Action* TV programme.

Claims about insurance scams, *inter alia*, provoked Havelange to rise from his chair in fury and withdraw from the studio, only to come back!

At the end of his devastating book, Yallop relates how in the end he faced Havelange with a résumé of the manifold charges he had brought against him; Havelange merely subjected him to a homily about what an honest and altruistic fellow he had been.

The book, published at £16.99 by Poetic Publishing, has many blemishes. I could do without Mr Yallop's essays into football journalism, his tiresome recapitulation of World Cup history, the generalised rant with which he needlessly finishes the book.

Names frequently are mis-spelt. There are horrible howlers. Alan Hardaker is referred to as secretary of the FA, the body he so bitterly opposed. Frank Leboeuf is designated a midfielder. No mention of the fact that Pele went to play football in New York because, by his own admission, he was millions of dollars in the hole.

Yallop is such an exceptional investigator that he does not have to masquerade as an expert on the game. Besides, it detracts from the main sweep of this remarkable book.

Havelange emerges from these pages as a Mephistophelian figure, by comparison with whom his successor at FIFA, Sepp Blatter, seems very small beer indeed.

But whatever Havelange's presumed and chronicled excesses, the fact that he survived as president of FIFA for 24 lamentable years surely tells you as much about the sycophants, time-servers, grovellers and placemen who facilitated his reign and his malfeasance.

One of the many people to whom Yallop spoke in Brazil was Havelange's former business partner, the endearingly named Dr Haddock Lobo. Yallop already had established as fact what one had often heard before: that Havelange's presumed fortune, made from a bus company, was sheer myth.

Havelange, we are told, "is not the main shareholder" in the Viacao Corneta firm, but occupies "what is in effect an honorary position on the board without any real influences, and that he was paid for his troubles precisely the same amount that a few years earlier he was telling a journalist was the sum his FIFA secretary in Zurich earns...$6,000, which would not represent a 10 per cent deposit on the alleged cost of a vote at FIFA Congress."

No wonder, perhaps, that Havelange needed such a colossally expensive campaign around the world to oust Sir Stanley Rous as president of FIFA in 1974, a black day indeed for football.

How did Havelange raise the money for his hugely expensive campaign? Haddock Lobo makes no bones about it. "Part of the money came from the Brazilian Sports Federation. The other part came from Orwad [their joint company]." This accusation is backed with abundant chapter and verse.

Alas, you have to thumb your way through the book to find what you want. Inexcusably, there is no index.

Back, however, to Havelange and the Brazilian federation. "Havelange," Haddock Lobo pithily remarked, "would say hello with another man's hat." General Ernesto Geisel and General Adalberto Nunes, one state president, the other a member of the ruling Brazilian junta, were outraged by the allegations surrounding Havelange's accession to power, but realised that to pursue him through the courts would have brought great embarrassment to Brazil.

Subsequently, at FIFA, there was the unholy alliance with the late Horst Dassler of Adidas who set up the ISL organisation; which as Yallop shows did so much better out of the deal than FIFA.

What happened during Havelange's years as FIFA president is chronicled in sickening detail. This book has now appeared in several European countries where Blatter has failed to have it banned. And Havelange seemingly has not even tried. Read it and despair.

Deserved tributes to a private man

Remembering Alf...Ray Wilson, Nobby Stiles, Geoff Hurst and Martin Peters at Ramsey's memorial service

FROM THE foul and fetid aroma of alleged corruption, let us turn to an incorruptible: to the late Sir Alf Ramsey, who died recently in obscure self-imposed exile in Ipswich.

I attended his memorial service held there, at the inspired insistence of his widow, in the imposing medieval church of St Mary Le Tower rather than in grandiose Westminster Abbey.

There was thus an endearing informality about the occasion, and how pleasing and moving it was to exchange greetings with the members of that triumphant 1966 World Cup team as they filed into the church.

George Cohen and Bobby Charlton gave sincere and beguiling addresses. Charlton spoke of the last match of a demanding tour of Latin America, in 1969, when England lost 2-1 to Brazil in Rio. Afterwards, he told Ramsey that while he'd enjoyed the tour, he was now looking forward to getting home to his wife. To which Ramsey replied that had he known this would be Bobby's attitude, he'd not have brought him! I have a personal memory of that visit to Rio. Alf, on that hot, exhausting, humid evening, had fielded a one-man attack, with predictably negative results. Next day, he joined a few of us on the beach and honestly admitted that his tactics had been a mistake.

Charlton and Cohen both emphasised that Alf was a 'private' man. In fact he had no social graces, and could at times be supremely unaware.

Late in 1962, I was in Turin making a TV documentary, its protagonist the Torino centre-forward Gerry Hitchens. Gerry drove myself and the sound recordist to watch Alf's Ipswich founder in the rain against Milan in a European Cup tie.

"Must say hello to Alf!" cried the genial Gerry. "Wish good luck to the lads!" Down the San Siro dressing-room corridor he strode. "Hello, Alf!"

Ramsey regarded him coolly. "Oh, yes," he said, in his famous Sarnt Major Posh tones. "You're playin' in these parts." Gerry was outraged.

A true professional

WHEN LIVERPOOL appointed France's Gerard Houllier last summer as joint manager with Roy Evans, sentimentality blocked common sense.

Such a duo was never going to work, nor did it. By the time Houllier was given full command, Liverpool's season was in free fall.

It's at least arguable that had Houllier been in sole command from the first, Liverpool would have done much better. What was surprising was Evans's implicit denigration of Houllier late in the season, when he announced that while Houllier had the 'academic' qualifications, it remained to be seen whether he was sufficiently professional.

That made no sense. Houllier's track record wholly overshadows that of Evans, a kind, decent man who worked for years in the Liverpool backroom.

True, Houllier was never a successful footballer, yet he abundantly paid his managerial dues, working his way up through minor French football, ultimately to lead Paris Saint-Germain to a League title and to manage the French national team. That sounds professional enough to me.

Off at Anfield...Denis Irwin departs

Prisoners of the cards

WHEN Denis Irwin was so controversially sent off at Anfield for kicking the ball out of play after the whistle had gone and thus receiving a second yellow card from David Elleray, the persisting paradox of that system was thrown into relief.

Elleray had booked Irwin for a harsh foul and could argue that the laws made a second booking inevitable. Yet there was no equivalence between the two offences, the second of which was trivial by comparison.

The referee, however, is a prisoner of the card system. Years ago, Gordon Hill, in his refereeing days, suggested the introduction of what he called a super caution, which did not necessitate expulsion. It's surely worth looking into. For the sake of the refs as well as players.

Play-off called for

HOW CLOSE the Premiership went to being decided on goal difference, or even, fatuously enough, on the basis of whether Arsenal or Manchester United had scored more goals!

In the event, United squeaked through by a single point. Surely it is time we adopted the Italian method, whereby if two teams finish top of the table on equal points, they play off.

It happened in 1964 when Inter and Bologna were level, Bologna having had points restored to them when it was proved that they had been falsely accused of doping two of their players. Justice was done when they beat Inter in Rome.

From the archives...

July 1991

WHERE DOES time go? Eight years have passed in what seems like a matter of weeks, and here we are, with Gianluca Vialli and Peter Schmeichel on the front cover of *World Soccer* in July 1991.

Vialli put one of Italy's two goals past Denmark goalkeeper Schmeichel in Malmo, Sweden, during the Scania 100 tournament – a rehearsal for the European Championship to be held in the same country a year later.

Elsewhere in the issue, a nine-page feature contained an enormous amount of information about the forthcoming Copa America, to be played in Chile. Eric Weil, author of most of the articles, dropped some broad hints that Argentina were likely to win, as duly happened.

On a more reflective note, Eric picked out a promising centre-back who was tipped to star for Colombia ...Andres Escobar.

Paul Gascoigne occupied a lot of space in the magazine, as in every other soccer outlet. His performance in the FA Cup Final – when he was carried off injured shortly after he had avoided being sent off for two dreadful fouls – drew some pungent comment from Brian Glanville, as did Gazza's pending move from Tottenham to Lazio.

In addition, there was a double-page spread on Gascoigne, in which Dave Smith charted his progress from back-street oik to millionaire oik with the aid of some interesting anecdotes.

On other pages, Jurgen Klinsmann of Internazionale announced his retirement – at the age of 26 – there was a three-page club focus on Moscow Spartak, a story about police dogs biting Boca Juniors players during a pitch invasion in the Libertadores Cup, and news from Peru that Deportivo Municipal player Hector Mathei had been killed by a bomb planted in his team's dressing-room.

It was also reported that retiring German goalkeeper Toni Schumacher gave the money raised by his farewell match to homeless children.

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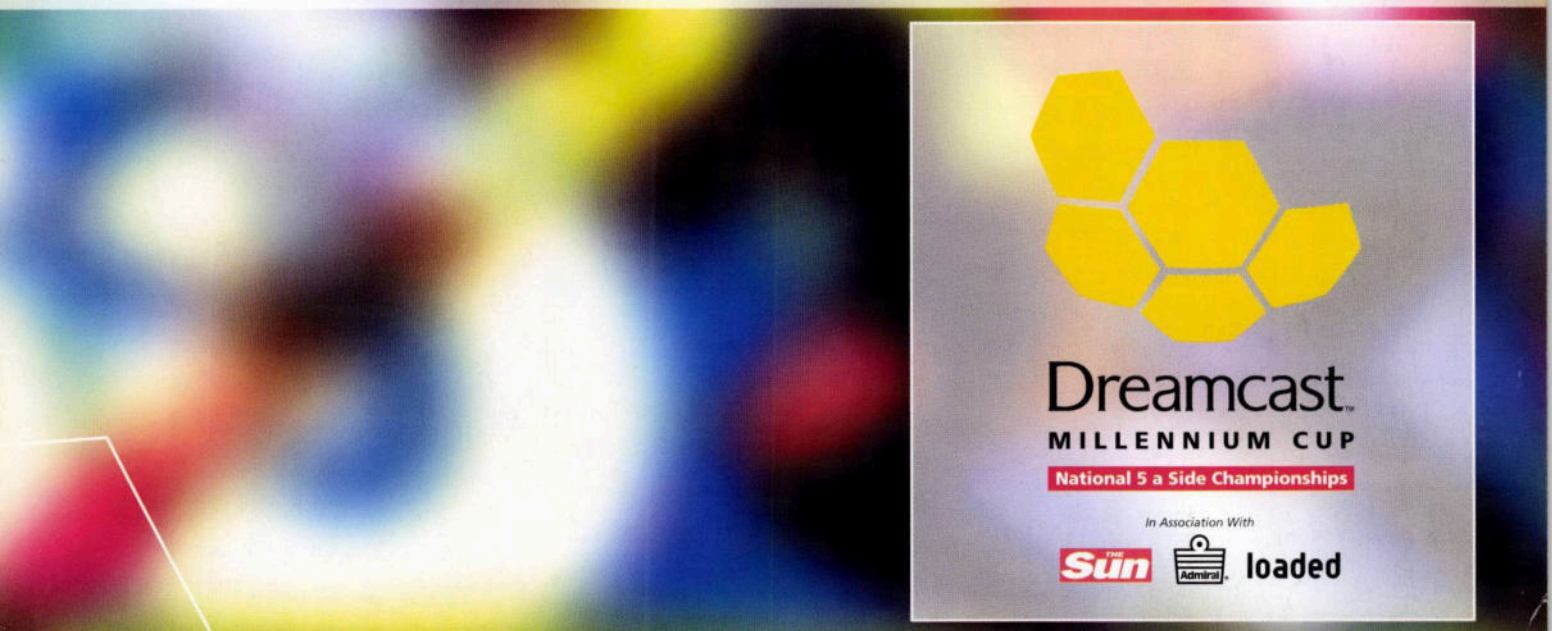

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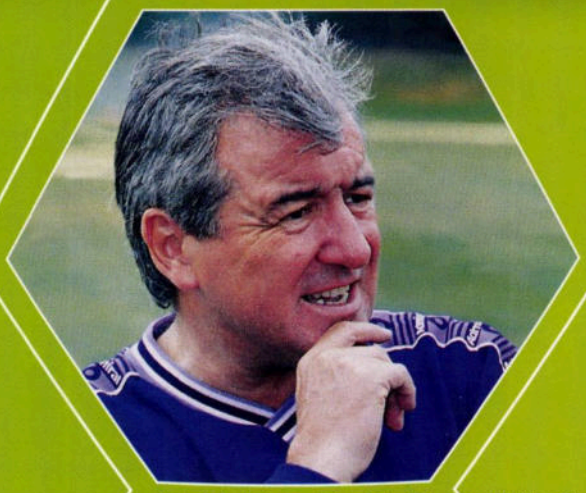

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